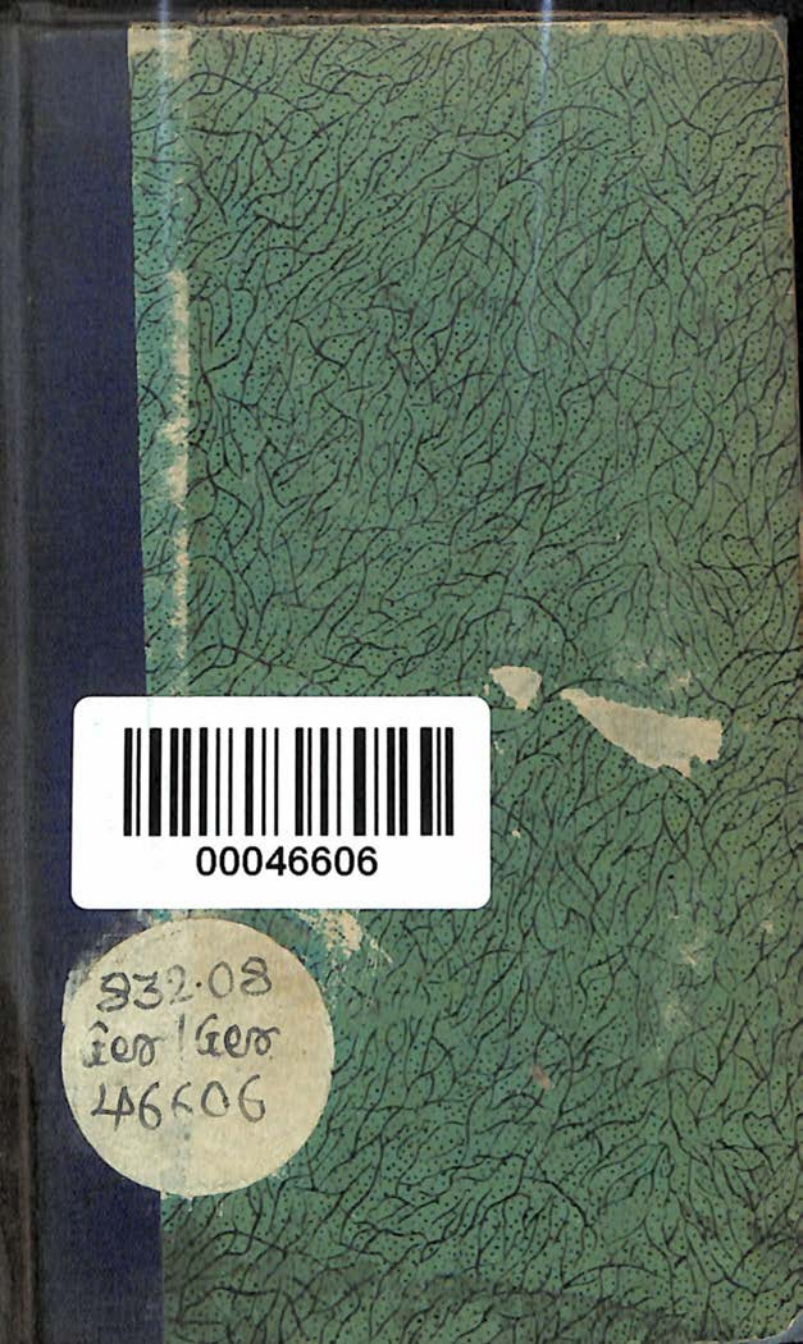
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# Count Otto.

## Act III. Scene last.

Published April 1800 by Vernor & Hood Poultry.

THE

# German Theatre,

TRANSLATED BY

BENJAMIN THOMPSON, ESQ.

*IN SIX VOLUMES.*

VOL. IV.

46806

CONTAINING

OTTO OF WITTELSBACH,
DAGOBERT,
CONSCIENCE.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

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# OTTO

OF

# WITTELSBACH;

OR, THE

## *CHOLERIC COUNT.*

A

*TRAGEDY,*

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

## JAMES MARCUS BABO,

BY

*Benjamin Thompson, Esq.*

London:

PRINTED FOR VERNOR AND HOOD
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1805.

c 32.6
Bab/ott

*DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

PHILIP OF SUABIA, *Emperor of Germany.*
LEWIS, *Duke of Bavaria.*
OTTO OF WITTELSBACH, *Count Palatine of Bavaria.*
HENRY, EGBERT, } *Brothers of Otto.*
ARTENBERG, WALDBURG, } *Courtiers.*
CALHEIM, *a Bavarian Count.*
WENZEL, *a Bohemian Count.*
WALLRICH, *an Imperial Herald.*
SIR FREDERICK OF REUSS.
WOLF, *Otto's Armour-Bearer.*
WILIBALD, EDGAR, } *Otto's Children.*
CONRAD, *and another Inhabitant of Aicha.*
STEWARD *to Reuss.*
TWO CITIZENS *of Munich.*

LUDMILLA, *Duchess of Bavaria.*
CUNIGUNDA, BEATRICE, } *Daughters of the Emperor.*

*Knights, Warriors, Guards, Courtiers, &c.*

# OTTO OF WITTELSBACH.

## *ACT I. SCENE I.*

*A gallery in the palace at* BRAUNAW.

*Enter* HENRY *and* WOLF, *on opposite sides.*

*Hen.* WELCOME, Wolf! what bring'st thou?

*Wolf.* Fraternal greeting from the Count Palatine to Henry, Count of Andechs.

*Hen.* Whence art thou come?

*Wolf.* From Wittelsbach.

*Hen.* Where is my brother?

*Wolf.* On his way hither.

*Hen.* Indeed! How long have you been in Bavaria?

*Wolf.* We arrived last night from the Emperor's court at our castle. By heavens, my Lord, you will scarcely believe me, when I tell you we were only a week in riding from Aix to Wittelsbach. Hills and woods flew so rapidly past us, that we could scarcely see them.

*Hen.* Why in such haste?

*Wolf.* My Lord, I'll tell you as much as I know of the matter. Hearing nothing from my master on the road but

"more speed, Wolf, more speed," I once ventured to ask a question, my Lord. "Sir," said I, "why in such haste?" "At Braunaw," answered he, "I'll have my beard shorn that I may please the women." I perceived that he meant "Wolf, hold your tongue, and attend to your horse!"—so I asked no more questions.

*Hen.* To please the women at Braunaw! Hem!

*Wolf.* But, my Lord, what means all this bustle in the castle?

*Hen.* Knowest thou not that our Duke is to be married to-day?

*Wolf.* Married! Not I. To whom?

*Hen.* To the widow of Count Albrecht, of Bogen.

*Wolf.* What? Well I shall now be surprised at nothing in the world. Why, she is a Bohemian.

*Hen.* She is young and handsome.

*Wolf.—(Shakes his head.)*—Hem! Hem! I must see her. Farewell, my Lord.

*Hen.* Whither art thou going?

*Wolf.* Into the saloon to see the bride.

*Hen.* Thou wilt not be admitted.

*Wolf.* How! Not admitted!

*Hen.* None but a Knight dare enter the Duke's apartments unbidden.

*Wolf.* What! May not a Bavarian greet his Prince?

*Hen.* Stay here, Wolf. The procession will pass through this gallery to the church, and thou wilt have a better view of it.

*Enter* Two Citizens *of Munich.*

*First Cit.* God be with you, noble Count!

*Hen.* Thanks, my friends; whence come you?

*First Cit.* We come from Munich to make an appeal in behalf of the citizens to our Duke.

*Hen.* How goes it in Munich?

*First Cit.* Thank Heaven, well. Since Albrecht of Bogen's followers and the Bohemians have ceased to molest us, we find good employment and subsistence. Would the whole empire were in as peaceful a state!

*Wolf.* It soon will be, good neighbour.

*Sec. Cit.* Ha! Wolf! Welcome home! Do you bring good news? Is the Count Palatine here too?

*Wolf.* He will soon be here.

*Sec. Cit.*—*(To the other.)*— Otto is coming. He will certainly assist us.

*Hen.* Wolf, they approach. I must accompany the Duke to church. Should Otto arrive in the mean time, tell him his brother Henry rejoices in the hope of seeing him.

*The procession appears. Fifty guards pass through the gallery, followed by many Knights and Nobles magnificently clothed. In the midst of them walks the* Duke, *supported by* Egbert *and another Peer.* Henry *joins them. After the* Duke, *walks the* Duchess, *supported by two ladies of rank and followed by others. These are succeeded by more Knights and Nobles, and fifty guards close the procession.*

*Duke.*—*(As he passes.)*—Is not that Wolf, the Squire of the Count Palatine?

*Wolf.*—*(Goes to him.)*—Your Highness is right.

*Duke.*—*(Stops.)*—What art thou doing here without thy master?

*Wolf.* He sent me to prepare for his reception.

*Duch.* Why do they not proceed?—*(The ladies tell her that the* Duke *is in conversation with* Wolf.*)*

*Duke.* My cousin Otto is coming to see me, then! I rejoice to hear it. But why did he send you? My palace is always ready for his reception. Farewell, Wolf.

[*Proceeds.*

*Duch.*—(*As she passes,*)—His presence was not exactly necessary.

*Manent* WOLF, *and the* TWO CITIZENS.

*Wolf.* Why did you not make your appeal!

*First Cit.* We saw that the Duchess did not like to be detained.

*Sec. Cit.* She seemed angry because the Duke spoke to you.

*First Cit.* Well, we have lost nothing by the delay, for the Count Palatine arrives, our petition is as good as when granted. He will never suffer a Bavarian to be aggrieved. —(*Trumpets are heard at a distance.*)

*Wolf.* Hark! Now they are in the church.

*First Cit.* Don't you think the Duchess handsome?

*Sec. Cit.* Yes, very handsome.

*Wolf.* True. In the whole procession, which seemed calculated for a display of magnificence and beauty, there was certainly nothing, which could be compared with her person, but that she was offended when the Duke spoke to me—Hem! A Duchess of Bavarian blood would not have been so.

*First Cit.* Well, well! She, perhaps, did not mean it amiss. —But, what news do you bring from the Emperor's court?

*Wolf.* None but good. Strasburg, Erfort and Aix are ours. Well may I say *ours*, for our Otto did most towards the conquest of them. Without him the Emperor Philip would but have been an arm without a sword, or a sword without an arm.

*First Cit.* How it delights me to hear such tidings! Yes, the race of Wittelsbach is the glory of Bavaria. Long may it continue so!

*Wolf.* Thanks, countrymen! Don't doubt it.

*First Cit.* The Emperor will surely reward the Count Palatine most royally.

*Wolf.* He will. Don't you know how?

*First Cit.* No.

*Wolf.* He will reward him with the hand of one of his daughters.

*Sec. Cit.* What say you?

*Wolf.* That Otto of Wittlesbach will soon be the Emperor's son-in-law.

*First Cit.* Heavens! How happy you make us! Come, Wolf, come with us, and let us drink to your brave master's health.

*Wolf.* I thank you, good men, but I must await his arrival here. I never in my life had it in my power to blame him for any thing, except that he is apt to forget his horse has no wings, and may at last be tired. But hark! 'Tis he. No one rides thus but Otto.

*Enter* OTTO.

*First and Sec. Cit.* Hail to the noble Count Palatine! Welcome, welcome to your native land!

*Otto.* Many thanks to you, dear Bavarians! Ha! Were not thou one of my followers, when I fought against Albrecht of Bogen?

*Sec. Cit.* I was, my Lord.

*Otto.* Why, you told me you meant to settle in Munich.

*Sec. Cit.* And did so, too, my Lord. We two are deputed by the Citizens to make an appeal to our gracious Duke.—(*To First Cit.*)—Speak.

*First Cit.* My Lord, the city of Munich has received a command from the Emperor, which infringes on its rights.

*Otto.* The Emperor infringes on your rights, do you say? He is not apt to do that.

*First Cit.* It is his command that we should pay an annual tribute of sixty-five silver marks, on account of the advantages we derive from the salt trade. This has never been done in the memory of man, and we therefore come to beg that our Duke would be graciously pleased to state it as a grievance in the Imperial courts.

*Otto.* If it be not customary and just, you shall not pay the sixty-five marks.

*First Cit.* It is not customary and just.

*Otto.* Then you shall pay nothing.

*First Cit.* We will tell the citizens that we must not pay the tribute.

*Otto.* Do so, and greet them in my name.

*First. Cit.* We return you thanks, my noble Lord. Heaven bless you and your children, that we may always know where to apply for protection!

*Otto.* Farewell, my countrymen. At Wittelsbach I would regale you, but here—

*First Cit.* Oh, to have seen you is a greater treat than any banquet. God preserve you, noble Count!

[*Exeunt Citizens.*

*Wolf.* I delivered your greeting to the Count of Andechs, and every thing is ready for your reception at the palace.

*Otto.* Knew my brother I was coming?

*Wolf.* No. I thought he seemed surprised at it.

*Otto.* Where is he?

*Wolf.* In the church. Had you come a moment sooner, you would have seen the handsome couple, and the nobles of the land pass through this gallery. The sight would have been worth the trouble, I assure you, sir.

*Otto.* Think'st thou so, Wolf? No—we ought to have been more speedy—we ought to have been here a week ago.

*Wolf.* Merciful Heavens! We must have ridden on the wind, then. But why sooner? You are arrived in time for the celebration of the marriage.

*Otto.* That is exactly what I did not wish. Half my possessions would I give, had I not come to the celebration of this marriage. Wolf, hold yourself ever in readiness, as if we were at an inn.

*Wolf.* I will, my Lord. Dare I speak as I think?

*Otto.* On your life in no other way.

*Wolf.* Why, then, I think we seem to be at an inn, where the same attention is not paid as heretofore. When you used to come hither, old and young, great and small, ran to greet you; but to-day not even a dog, belonging to the Duke, makes his appearance.

*Otto.* So much the better, Wolf. The Duke's dogs are idle dogs. They are fed to do nothing. *(Trumpets are again heard.)*

*Wolf.* I believe they are coming from church. Yes, see!

*The procession returns in the same order as it went. The* Duke, Henry, *and* Egbert, *step out to welcome* Otto. *The procession stops.* Wolf *goes.*

*Duke.* You are welcome, dear kinsman. I rejoice that you favour me with your presence on this festive day.

*Hen. and Egb.* Welcome, brother Otto, welcome!

*Otto.* I am the man to scent a feast at the distance of a hundred miles. I am glad you had so much confidence in my nose, as to think any intelligence or invitation needless. —*(The Duke starts)*—Dare I venture to greet your lady

in my dusty armour?—*(She just enters with her train.)*—Duchess, my best wishes for your welfare announce me as your humble servant.

*Duch.* I thank you, my Lord.

*Duke.* Come with us, Otto.

*Otto.* Pardon me. I will not, by my rude appearance, darken the splendor of the day. I shall attend you in your cabinet.

*Duke.* Well, as you please.—*(To an attendant.)*—Are the Count's rooms ready for his reception?—*(The attendant shrugs his shoulders.)*—Look after them instantly. Well kinsman, I expect you. *(They proceed.)*

*Manent* OTTO *and* HENRY.

*Otto.* Henry!—Oh that I could compress my whole thoughts into one word, and declare what is passing in this boiling breast! Tell me—what think you of this union?—Brother, shrug not your shoulders thus instead of answering, nor look around as if some one were listening to us. Speak boldly—boldly as a man.

*Hen.* I wish the Duke had not done this.

*Otto.* Now by all that is good and holy, had I been here, it should not have been done. But I was the last, who was acquainted with it. Lewis's union was the tale of all the Emperor's court, ere I had learnt it. Is it thus that I am treated?

*Hen.* How! Did you receive no notice—no invitation?

*Otto.* I tell you, no. I should perhaps have been still in ignorance, had not the Emperor assured me such was the case. He—he himself sent me to my kinsman's wedding.

*Hen.* I understand it not.

*Otto.* But when I tell you that not long ago I asked the Emperor to bestow his younger daughter on my kinsman,

Lewis, and was not refused—understand you, now, what all this means?

*Hen.* By Heaven, if this be as you say—

*Otto.* It is, it is. The Emperor sent me hither. Could he have any intention than to prevent this act of folly? He did not say thus much, but had I been, at that moment, capable of forming any other idea, it appeared as strongly in his tone, in his every look, as it is at this moment graven in my heart. By my faith, had any evil spirit wished to torment me with a dreadful dream, the most crafty of all demons must he have been, if he had succeeded in filling my brain with such fancies. Oh! Heaven grant my anger may not make me as talkative as a court-sycophant!—Had any one told me that the firmament would fall upon us, I would have answered: "Let it fall;" but never can I tamely hear to hear that Bavaria's Duke, while professing to be our Emperor's friend, has married a cousin of Bohemian Ottocar, who clings as closely to the Duke of Brunswick as the iron to a horse's hoof.

*Hen.* Brother, many things have lately happened, which have led me to suppose that our Emperor not only approves of this connection, but has even promoted it. Ludmilla may, perhaps, have reconciled her uncle Ottocar to the Emperor.

*Otto.* Ludmilla reconciled her uncle! She, who so much rejoiced at the anticipated desolation of Bavaria! 'Twas she alone who encouraged Albrecht to form an alliance with Bohemia, in order to exterminate us all.

*Hen.* I may be wrong, but my conjecture is not without foundation.

*Otto.* Explain, then, what you know.

*Hen.* Not here, my brother. Retire with me to some place, where we can converse without interruption.

*Otto.* To converse without interuption I will go with

you; but not as if I wished to creep into a corner, and in a smothered voice give vent to the sensations of my soul. My words are bold and loud; for I have not a thought which I am not ready to avow. [*Exeunt.*

Scene. *An Apartment in the Castle.*

*Enter* DUCHESS *and* WENZEL.

*Duch.* Kinsman, I assure you his hatred and friendship cannot be so indifferent to me, and I know he hates me. His arrival has, doubtless, quite another cause than that which he declares. He is not the man, who would forsake the Emperor's court for nothing, or for mere politeness. My husband has just informed me that he seemed highly incensed at not having had any notice of our marriage. I am sure he will suppose me to be the cause of this, and policy dictated it; for had he gained earlier notice of our intentions, all my hopes would have been destroyed.

*Wen.* True, but why need you now be afraid of him? Your Lord's affections and your own privileges place you beyond his power.

*Duch.* What I am, I am become through affection, and no power is more wavering than that which depends upon the humours of a husband. My Lewis is young, and I am not so vain as to build upon the continuance of his passion.—There are men, who, without fair words and smooth discourse, obtain a safe command over another's inclination: Of these Otto is one. The fame of his exploits gives him consequence throughout the empire, and, I have often observed that my husband feels a reverence towards him, mingled with fear. All this makes me uneasy,—I therefore wish you, cousin, to sound his opinions, and, if it be possible, to convert his hatred into friendship, or, at least, into indifference.

*Wen.* Be assured I will leave no means untried to gratify your wishes. I will lull to repose my hatred towards this haughty man, and devote my mind entirely to your service.

*Duch.* Enough! You shall find me not ungrateful.—My husband comes.—More of this anon. [*Exit* Wen.

*Enter* DUKE.

*Duke.* My love, how can you so long deprive me of your company? You know my heart thinks every moment lost, which is not spent with you. Why is your countenance less bright than heretofore? What lies so heavy on your heart as to disturb you on this happy day.

*Duch.* My husband! My Lewis! What bliss is there in those words?—But let me not declare the trifling cause of my uneasiness, lest your affection should find some fancied consequence in a mere trifle.

*Duke.* It must be as my dearest thinks it—Yet let me know it.—Unbounded confidence is the most sacred duty of affection. Conceal not from me, I beseech you, one emotion of your mind.

*Duch.* Oh, why is human nature allowed no perfect bliss? Even the happiest state is embittered by the thought of its doubtful continuance. Lewis, I had but one wish,—*(Takes his hand.)*—this!—It is gratified—completely gratified—*(Embracing him.)*—but—

*Duke.* Speak, my life, oh speak!

*Duch.* I am disturbed by the sentiments of your kinsman—the Count Palatine. He hates me.

*Duke.* You! the emblem of beauty and affection! Then must his blood be gall, and his heart the repository of baseness.

*Duch.* I am certain that he hates me. He considers me the cause of all the misery inflicted on Bavaria by Count

*Albrecht.* To my charge he in is own mind lays all the devastations occasioned by the incursions of your Bohemian neighbour.—Must not this distress me?

*Duke.* Be at ease, my love. When he becomes acquainted with your noble mind, repentance for his error will be a sufficient punishment.

*Duch.* Believe me an animosity so rooted is not so easily removed. To be convinced that I am innocent, it is necessary he should see with an unbiassed eye. An object which is hateful through habit, appears ugly on every side.

*Duke.* Otto is really not malicious.

*Duch.* I am silent.—*(She sighs.)*

*Duke.* Dearest, this mournful look pierces my very soul. Tell me, what can I do to relieve you?—I'll speak to Otto. His heart is open, and his sentiments are on his lips. I shall soon learn whether there is any foundation for your uneasiness. Rely on me.

*Duch.* I was just applying to Count Wenzel on this subject when you entered. I desired him to vindicate me to your cousin Otto.

*Duke.* Vindicate! That need not be done by my wife. It is only the criminal, who needs defence. Who are you, and who am I? I own I should be glad that my kinsman Otto approved of my choice; but to your perfections, and to no other motive, will I be obliged for his approbation. Were such my wish, I need but tell him that through you the Emperor obtains the friendship of Ottocar: and, from that moment, he would be your first of friends.

*Duch.* I should be happy if he knew it.

*Duke.* He shall—and be ashamed of having, for a moment, mistaken you. But one doubt distresses me.

*Duch.* What is it, my dear Lord?

*Duke.* Whether my cousin knows that the Emperor is about to bestow one of his daughters on Duke Ottocar.

*Duch.* That Wenzel shall try to discover.—But see, the Count Palatine approaches.

*Enter* OTTO.

*Duke.* Welcome once more, good kinsman.

*Otto.* The Emperor commends him to you, and wishes you all happiness. He likewise commanded me to state that he relies upon your sending the usual supply of vassals, and supporting him with your alliance, as hitherto.

*Duke.* I hope you assured the Emperor of my zeal in his service.

*Otto.* I did.—*(Looks scornfully at the Duch.)*

*Duch. (Aside.)*—Ha! Disdain!—Count, if you perceived that I was present, I beg you likewise to observe that I withdraw. [*Exit.*

*Duke.* Kinsman, what has my wife done, that you survey her with a look as bold as if she were a base and wanton wench?

*Otto.* What have your ancestors and subjects done, that you should make this woman your wife?

*Duke.* Who can produce a charge against her virtue? I challenge any one to make the attempt. She deserves to be Bavaria's Duchess. I know you are, in general, not unreasonable. Your sentiments are candid. Tell me frankly why you are exasperated against my wife?

*Otto.* Can I like the serpent which stung my brother or my son? Still bleed the wounds inflicted on my native country by Bohemia's arms.

*Duke.* How is my wife to blame for this?

*Otto.* She it was, who sharpened the steel, and urged to war.

*Duke.* No, on my word, she never encouraged slaughter.

Many a tear did she shed for the misfortunes which her late husband's fury brought upon Bavaria.

*Otto.* It may be so. Enough is it for me that she is our Emperor's foe, being the friend of his most deadly foe.

*Duke.* This seems to you so certain that you ground your hatred on it. Kinsman, I do not in any thing chuse to excite your reproaches. I loved you ever—love you still.—Many would ridicule my conduct, if they knew that I demeaned myself so far as to defend my consort to a man, who is not my master, or my father.

*Otto.* Why do you this, Duke?

*Duke.* Because I do not wish to think you unjust.

*Otto.* I love my native land, my race, and Philip.

*Duke.* So do I.

*Otto.* And yet you form a connection, which binds you to Bohemia's Duke, and to the Emperor's avowed rival, Brunswick's Otto. Our native land, our race's fame and Philip's rights are torn from your heart.

*Duke.* Then would it bleed.—No, this alliance binds the Bohemian Duke to our side.

*Otto.* To yours, and drags you to his Otto.

*Duke.* Why talk of Otto.—Ottocar is Philip's friend.

*Otto.* The Emperor Philip's friend?

*Duke.* Knew you not that?

*Otto.* Not I—nor do I yet know it. Ottocar, Duke of Bohemia, and ally to Brunswick's Otto, Philip's friend?

*Duke.* This was the dowry of my wife. I required her cousin's friendship towards the Emperor.

*Otto.* And did she promise it?

*Duke.* She promised and procured it. Long since did Ottocar acknowledge Philip as the lawful Emperor, and enter into alliance with him. This, of course, you know, but that my consort was the author of the reconciliation, you seem to have been ignorant.

*Otto.* For Heaven's sake, be serious.

*Duke.* You seem astonished. Surely Ottocar's alliance with Philip is not unknown to you?

*Otto.* You banter me.

*Duke.* By my soul I do not. They are friends—friends through the interference of my wife.

*Otto.* Indeed!—Ha! I comprehend this. Where there is no danger Otto is not wanted. Now, by heavens this is not right. To deceive *me!*

*Duke.* Who has deceived you?

*Otto.* I hope, no one—but at a distance it wears a villanous appearance.

*Duke.* Of what are you talking.

*Otto.* Think!—Not to say a word to me!—Not one word!—Philip not to say one word to Otto!

*Duke.* To you, the worthiest of his confidence! I thought the whole affair was as well known to you as to me. The negotiation between Ottocar and Philip has been on foot three months.

*Otto.* Three months!—It is not longer since I asked the Emperor to bestow on you his younger daughter.

*Duke.* What answered he?

*Otto.* Smiling, he told me it perhaps might happen.—I now for the first time comprehend his *might.*—God of Heaven! What is this?—I beseech you apologize in my behalf to your fair consort. If poor Otto's friendship be of any value to her, assure her she possesses it.

*Duke.* I am happy to see you convinced that she is worthy of it.

*Otto.* And now, farewell till we meet again. God be with you!

*Duke.* Will you away so soon?

*Otto.* I feel as if my guardian angel beckoned me away. God be with you!

*Duke.* After the repast.

*Otto.* Oh, I can neither eat nor drink. Farewell.

*Enter* WENZEL.

*Duke.* See! Here comes Duke Ottocar's ambassador and kinsman, Count Wenzel.

*Wen.* I reckon this day the happiest of my life, as I am allowed in person to greet the valiant Count Palatine Otto of Wittelsbach.

*Otto.* Without ceremony, I beg. How fares Count Wenzel?

*Duke.* Have you seen each other before?

*Wen.* Never in my life; but Otto's fame is as public as the light of day. When in foreign countries Germany is mentioned, Otto of Wittelsbach is always quoted among the first of its heroes.

*Otto.* Why all this! We have seen each other before.

*Duke.* As I said, Otto, after the repast. [*Exit.*

*Wen.* What you say is strange. I know not that I ever saw you till to-day.

*Otto.* Still more strange is it that you require an explanation of a circumstance so trifling. Who commanded the Bohemians, in the last battle against us?

*Wen.* When you conquered us? 'Twas I, but I saw you not.

*Otto.* It was broad day, and, by the Almighty, none of my enemies can ever say I did not shew myself.

*Wen.* I saw the army, but was not idle or cool enough to distinguish any one. My defeat alone convinced me that Otto fought against us.

*Otto.* Remind me not of that conquest, for it did me little credit.—There was a coward among your first warriors.

*Wen.* Do you know him?

*Otto.* Blue was his armour, and a black plume waved on his helmet. He stalked across the field more haughty than courageous, but when the attack commenced, he vanished. I at length espied him at a distance from the throng, and ran towards him—but he fled. "Hold," cried I, "blue knight, break a lance with me." The blue coward fled.

*Wen.*—*(Aside.)*—Damnation!—*(Aloud.)*—Well, Count Palatine, you know such men are to be found in every army. 'Tis enough that you subdued us.—Who would have thought that instead of meeting in the field, we should encounter each other here?

*Otto.* True. The world is full of changes.

*Wen.* I shall now lose no more battles against you, but may hope soon to conquer with you.

*Otto.* I only beg you will not bring the blue knight with you. Our Bavarians know him.

*Wen.*—*(Alarmed.)*—Know him!

*Otto.* Enough of this. Have you been long here?

*Wen.* My kinsman Ottocar deputed me to announce his alliance with the Emperor to Duke Lewis. In truth, no order could have been more welcome to me. All my trouble is thereby rewarded.

*Otto.* What trouble?

*Wen.* To obtain a victory is often not so difficult as to graft friendship on the tree of discord.—The Emperor knows who gained him Ottocar's alliance.

*Otto.* Who?

*Wen.* Your kinsman's wife and I.

*Otto.* And dare you vouch for the continuance of these sentiments.

*Wen.* That, Count Palatine, is at present the grand object. I daily expect orders to proceed to the Emperor's court, where I shall tie the band of amity into a knot, which mortal hands can never loose.

*Otto.* That were a master-piece of policy.

*Wen.* Yet is it easily comprehended. Philip has two daughters.

*Otto.* Methinks your ideas make strange transitions. From the knot which no mortal hand can loose to Philip's daughter!

*Wen.* Not so, Count Palatine. I just wanted to shew you the end of the thread, which is to form this knot. You hold the highest place in the confidence and favour of the Emperor. Doubtless, therefore, you have been some time absent from his court, as you seem ignorant of what I mean. To be brief, the Emperor's eldest daughter, Cunigunda, is to be married to Ottocar.

*Otto.*—(*Starts and looks at him.*)—Is to be?

*Wen.* You are right. *Is,* I might have said; for nothing is wanting but the benediction of the priest. The treaty is concluded.

*Otto.* Ha! Ha!—Is this another piece of your policy?

*Wen.* Ask the Emperor, or believe me on my word. I was present.

*Otto.* By my word yours is false.

*Wen.* Count Palatine!

*Otto.* Pshaw! Thus should you have looked at me, when I called: "Blue knight, break a lance with me."

*Wen.* Death and destruction?

*Otto.* Enraged! Well be it as you please.—Ha! Ha! Ottocar's wife! Pray tell me the tale again before your fury chokes you.

*Wen.* May my soul be damned if this insult shall be unrevenged.

*Otto.* Why talk of insult and revenge? I advise you not to use such words—Your heat has made me cool enough to perceive that your tale of Ottocar's alliance was a mere joke. Now, Count Wenzel, if in your conscience you think I have said too much, I crave your pardon. My brain was teeming with ideas which would not let me relish any joke.

*Wen.* I never joked with you, Count Palatine, and never will. Why am I thus insulted on account of things which concern not either of us? Why is my word disputed? It galls your haughty soul, perhaps, that Philip should bestow his daughter, or Ottocar accept her, without your consent.

*Otto.* Now, by the powers of heaven, this blue knight has wounded me so deeply that I feel it through my very marrow —I must away.—'Tis incredible—Philip—Oh, 'tis most false—but I must away.—— Blue knight, take my advice. Leave your sword at home, and go with your tongue into the field. If your aim be always as good as it has been just now, your female armour can never fail to vanquish hardy manhood. [*Exit.*

*Wen.* Have I then really hit the mark, without intending it?—Yes, yes. Ere long, when all my nerves are strung, trust me thou shalt feel the blue knight's lance. If I tamely submit to such an insult, may I—

*Enter* DUCHESS.

*Duch.* Well, Count! he just now left you.

*Wen.* Oh, mention it not, I beseech you.—Heavens and earth! Such an insult!

*Duch.* How!

*Wen.* It is more infamous than you can fancy.

*Duch.* What said he? Speak.

*Wen.* No. Let me be silent, I entreat.

*Duch.* If you intend me to remain your friend, speak.

*Wen.* I must, then—but let me, at least, think of words to shroud his diabolical ideas.—No, by Heaven, I cannot. You will be incensed at me, for being able to utter such an abominable falsehood.

*Duch.* Be it what it may, I will know it.

*Wen.* "She is a mere lascivious strumpet, who has tickled

my kinsman's appetite with loose caresses, or, perhaps, with love-inspiring potions."

*Duch.* I!

*Wen.* Yes. The Villain!

*Duch.* Villain, indeed! His ruin is resolved.

*Wen.* At the same time, he— . .

*Duch.* Enough! My heart will break.

*Wen.* And should I not think of vengeance?

*Duch.* Yes. Vengeance! Vengeance!

*Wen.* Come into your chamber. There we will consider—

*Duch.* Consider! Oh, were I a man like you—did I but wear a sword like you—

*Wen.* You are right. I will pursue him, and demand satisfaction.—But may I rely on your protection?

*Duch.* All the blame shall rest on me.

*Wen.* 'Tis well.—I only request, that, till my return, you will not mention the subject to the Duke.

*Duch.* What have I done to the wretch, that he should thus load me with infamy? Had he plunged a poniard into my heart, Heaven knows I could have forgiven him.—But this insult!—Oh my kinsman, avenge my wrongs. [*Exeunt.*

Scene.—*The Gates of the Castle.*

*Enter* Otto.

*Otto.* I have heard that a diadem will sometimes harden the heart and turn the brain. Oh! How sorry should I be, were I obliged to bellow in the ear of Philip:—"Thou hast not kept thy promise."—Shame would choke me, could any man address me thus. Still can I hear him say to me: "Thou shalt have Cunigunda;" and now he wants to sell her to Bohemia's Duke. Ottocar offers wavering friendship—Otto of Wittelsbach has paid with blood. Why do I tarry here?

Wolf, where art thou?—Beatrice may make a good housewife too--perhaps more suitable to me. But why this secresy?

*Enter* WOLF.

Wolf, where are the horses?

*Wolf.* There they stand, ready.

*Hen.*—*(At a distance.)*—Brother Otto!

*Otto.* Who calls?

*Wolf.* Your brothers are approaching. I'll go to the horses, and wait your coming. [*Exit.*

*Enter* HENRY *and* EGBERT.

*Hen.* Brother whither go you?

*Otto.* Can you, at the distance of *eighty miles, see whether some villany be not plotting, which concerns you?

*Egb.* No. Why so?

*Otto.* Therefore I must away. Heaven be with you!

*Hen.* What is your purpose!

*Otto.* As soon as I know it I will dispatch a messenger to you. As yet I know nothing, except that I must away. Farewell, brothers. Happy is it for you, that you can thus spend your days in the bosom of our native land.

*Hen.* Remain with us in Bavaria. Leave the Emperor's court.

*Otto.* My duty and my word oblige me to dwell there, among a crowd of servile parasites. There the courtier smiles and prays, while villany is busy in his mind—kisses and greets his brother-courtier, while malice rankles in his heart.

*Egb.* You have fulfilled your promise. Stay with us. Methinks some mighty deed awaits you.

*One of these is equal to five or six English miles.

*Otto.* Think'st thou so?—Then shall the mighty deed find Otto ready.—Remember me in your prayers, good Egbert. —Henry, you will merit my thanks by going to Wittelsbach, and looking after my two boys. I shall take the nearest road to court. On my arrival, I found Wilibald not well.

*Hen.* Will you not soon bestow a mother on them?

*Otto.* Ha!—No more! I must away. Greet the Duke in my name, and assure the Duchess of my regard.—Farewell, Egbert!—Farewell, Henry! Heaven grant we may meet again at this place—or rather at Wittelsbach; for there I always feel as if the spirits of our princely ancestors dwelt in each gallery and room, where formerly they stood projecting mighty deeds, or happy in the conscious recollection of having achieved them. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

# *ACT II.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in the Emperor's Palace at Aix.*

*Enter* CUNIGUNDA *and* BEATRICE. *They stop and seem to be listening.*

*Cun.* Hark! The heavy portals turn upon their massy hinges.—How I tremble!—Artenberg is conducting the messenger to my father. Oh! I dread the tidings which he brings.

*Bea.* Alas! No doubt you soon will be the wife of Ottocar,—then you must leave this castle.

*Cun.* Oh dearest Beatrice!

*Bea.* When I am left, how sad and dreary will every thing appear! Instead of enjoying a sister's society, I shall wander quite alone through the vaulted corridors, which echo with the din of arms. Oh! let me go with you to Bohemia.

*Cun.* Dearest sister, might I but be allowed to wander through these vaulted corridors, how happy should I be. But who can tell what fate awaits me? I do not know the man to whom I am to be united. Even my father, who has destined me to be his wife, has never seen him. He is, perhaps, rude as the manners of his native land.

*Bea.* On that account let me go with you: I will share your joys and sorrows.

*Cun.* If my father would consent, most willingly.

*Bea.* Ask him. I hope he will.

*Cun.* He is of late become so gloomy and morose, that I scarcely have courage to address him. Often have I endeavoured to discover whence his discontent arises, but in vain. The Duke of Brunswick cannot now make any claim to the imperial crown, for Ottocar, his principal ally, has joined my father. Almost all Germany is on Philip's side, and victory seems bound to his banners.

*Bea.* Alas, my Cunigunda! Would we were in our native Suabia! There our father was always affectionate, and kind to us. But since the imperial diadem—

*Cun.* Some one approaches.

*Enter* PHILIP.

*Phi.* Are you here, children? Come hither! Give me a kiss.

*Cun.* It is long since you allowed us such a happiness.

*Phi.*—(*To* Beatrice.)—Why do you gaze upon me thus, as if it were a rarity to see me?

*Bea.* This gracious look, this kindness toward us—

*Phi.* Is somewhat unusual, you would say. Why, yes. Anxiety disturbs my mind, and overspreads my countenance. Fortune has never rightly smiled upon me, but today she did it in a dream.—(*To* Beat.)—Be cheerful too, my Beatrice. You shall be made happy soon. Now, leave us. I have something to impart in private to your sister.

[*Exit* Beat.

Cunigunda, Duke Ottocar is eager to possess his bride. This makes me truly happy, for I always thought he might alter his intentions. His messenger has rid me of this fear, and we will hasten your departure.—What now?

*Cun.* My father, this unexpected news—

*Phi.* Unexpected it may be, but not unwished. I recol-

lect, indeed, that once, when I made mention of this union, you evinced some opposition to it; but that will probably not be the case again, for I said a few words to you at that time—

*Cun.* My father, I know my duty.

*Phi.* You are wise, my Cunigunda—therefore I love you. Now listen to me. You will soon become the wife of a Prince who was my enemy. It has cost me much trouble to bring him over to my interest, and your hand was at last fixed upon to be the pledge of reconciliation. When you are in his land, let not the husband drive the father from your recollection. Observe every thing that passes, and give me notice of it. I will send some cool experienced man to assist you in every case with his advice, and maintain our communication. Beware of disclosing this to your husband: if you love yourself or me, be not cajoled by Ottocar's caresses.

*Cun.* I cannot do this, my father.

*Phi.* How?

*Cun.* Is Ottocar still your foe, that you would even send a spy into his bedchamber?

*Phi.* This foolish language I expected not from Cunigunda—but more on this subject anon. Meanwhile, devote your whole attention to your dress and ornaments, that you may appear before your husband in all the splendour of an Emperor's daughter. Spare no expense—your father will not grudge it—But ere I go, I have some pleasing tidings for you. Ottocar informs me, by his messenger, that my rival, Brunswick's Otto, will soon send an ambassador hither—and for what purpose, think you?

*Cun.* To sue for peace, perhaps, or a temporary cessation of hostilities.

*Phi.* To sue for Beatrice in marriage.

*Cun.* My sister!

*Phi.* Her dowry is to be my friendship, and on this condition he renounces all his claims to the imperial crown.

*Cun.* Oh Heavens!

*Phi.* Do you weep?—I comprehend you not to-day.

*Cun.* Be not angry, gracious father. I was distressed at the difference between my situation and my sister's. She remains in Germany, and has a German husband, while I am sent away, far from every one dear to me. Transplant a twig from any country to a wild and foreign soil—then see how soon it droops: No dew refreshes it, no sun-beam animates its growth—it droops and dies.

*Phi.* Peace!

*Enter* ARTENBERG.

*Art.* A knight is arrived from the Duke of Brunswick, and humbly craves a private audience with your Majesty.

*Phi.* Conduct him hither—(*Exit* Art.)—Ottocar, you see, is a noble friend. With him the deed follows the word. Go my child, I love you, but be wise. Go. [*Exit* Cun.

*Enter* ARTENBERG *and* REUSS.

*Art.* Sir Frederick of Reuss, ambassador from Otto, Duke of Brunswick.

*Phi.* Speak, Sir Frederick.

*Reu.* Otto, the Holy Roman Emperor, sends, greeting—

*Phi.* How! What?—No more! Wert thou commanded to address me thus?

*Reu.* I beseesh you—

*Phi.* Not another word! Our German empire is not a double-headed monster. A healthy well formed body has but one head. Otto of Brunswick would have been a profitable member; but as he now dares to act, he may be com-

pared to an excrescence, which deforms the whole, and which must be cut away. By my faith I could not have believed such arrogance. He assumes to himself the highest of all dignities, to which he has no further claim than by his youthful indiscretion, and the instigation of a few rebellious princes, who hope by discord to evade the punishment of their transgressions. Such are his dependants and counsellors. Do men like these form an imperial court? Would it not be better for him, were he to promote the welfare of our empire, and acquire the state's respect, than thus to draw upon himself a recompense, which he has not deserved? I thought he was reflecting upon this, and kept my forces back, because I would not willingly stain German swords with German blood; but now, as his rank pride increases, as his insulting arrogance resounds even in my own imperial residence—now, I will proceed as rigid justice dictates. Yet thou shalt see how well inclined I am to tread the path of kindness. Count Artenberg, I vest you with full power to hear him in my name; but at the first syllable which encroaches on my dignity, break off the conference, and give him safe conduct from our court without delay. [*Exit.*

*Reu.* Give me safe conduct, then, that I may leave your court without delay.

*Art.* Would you do this ere you have fulfilled your Prince's mandate?

*Reu.* I am old, and know the customs between prince and prince. I have often been employed in embassies, but never was I treated thus—even like an offensive letter, which one tramples on, or tears.—Give me safe conduct from your court.

*Art.* I pray you moderate your anger. Your business is perhaps of such a nature as to pacify the Emperor.

*Reu.* My business may be stated in a few words. Otto

would willingly resign his claims, his just, well-founded claims to the imperial crown, on one condition. "Peace and concord," says he, "are better than dignity and power. The empire shall perceive that I deserve to be its head, because on its account I forfeit all my title to the dignity."

*Art.* That is noble. What is the condition which you mentioned?

*Reu.* The hand of Philip's younger daughter. To none but his father-in-law will Otto yield.

*Art.* I will instantly state this to the Emperor.

*Reu.* Do so.—Tell me, dwells the Count Palatine Otto of Wittelsbach in the palace?

*Art.* He is in Bavaria.

*Reu.* No. He entered the city with me but an hour ago.

*Art.* How! Is he here?

*Reu.* He overtook me near Cologne, and from that place we came together. He has had an infamous adventure on the journey. Have you heard no account of it?

*Art.* None.

*Reu.* Soon after he left Braunaw, he was attacked by a troop of armed horsemen; while defending himself against the villains, he espied a knight who from a distance viewed the battle. Otto, conceiving him to be the instigator, rushed towards him, and with a single blow dispatched the coward. He deserved not such a noble death. It was Count Wenzel, Ottocar's kinsman and ambassador to Lewis. The titled scoundrel was the foe of every upright man, and hence we see the demon Envy rages sometimes even in the blood of princes.

*Art.* This is a strange adventure.—You did not tell Count Otto what was the nature of your embassy?

*Reu.* My embassy is a secret. I bear a seal upon my lips.

*Art.* 'Tis well.—If I thought you would not treat a well-meant caution with contempt—

*Reu.* You must have a bad opinion of me, if you think I—

*Art.* Heaven forbid! But one may sometimes create suspicion with the best intention, especially when every circumstance cannot be explained.

*Reu.* Tell me but what it is, and I will make a proper use of it.

*Art.* Do not have much concern with the Count Palatine, if you wish to obtain the Emperor's good opinion.

*Reu.—(Starts back with astonishment, but recovers.)*—I thank you. [*Exit* Art.
How! Can Philip of Suabia cease to regard Otto of Wittelsbach? Thou envious courtier! What would'st thou be without thy master? What thy master without Otto? I will maintain and engrave it in my mind by repetition, that the traitor is not so dangerous to a monarch as the fawning courtier. The one merely aims at his life, while the other darkens his fame, can make him the abhorrence of mankind, and will do it, if he can thereby forward any project.

*Enter* OTTO.

*Otto.* Well, fellow-traveller, how tastes the air at the Imperial court?

*Reu.* It smells a little of subtlety, against which an honest man must be upon his guard.

*Otto.* Ay, a crafty old fox has his hole not far off. Do you scent him? Have you seen the Emperor?

*Reu.* I have.

*Otto.* Looks he like a man or a woman?

*Reu.* Like a man.

*Otto.* 'Tis well!

*Enter* CUNIGUNDA.

*Cun.* The Count Palatine returned! Welcome, my Lord!

*Otto.* I am like a shalm-piper, who wanders from one wedding to another.—My cousin's nuptials are over, and having heard of yours, I am come hither to amuse you with a tune.

*Cun.* You are ever jocular and cheerful. Tell me something of Suabia and Bavaria, our dear native countries.

*Otto.* There dwell men who keep their promises. But I have not seen much of them since I saw you; for I have travelled like a cloud upon the wind. My great desire to hail you bride spurred me, and I my steed.

*Enter* ARTENBERG.

*Art.* Sir Frederick of Reuss, the Emperor desires to see you.—Ha! Welcome, Count Palatine!

*Otto.* Heaven be with you, Artenberg!

*Art.* You have travelled rapidly.

*Otto.* But have not kept pace with my wishes.—Hear me. I have been provoked as I came hither. A man was standing on the road, and at his side two dogs. One was a faithful watchful mastiff; the other was a dog of foreign breed. The man had a sop of bread, which he held to the good mastiff, as if it were intended for him, and at the same time waved his empty hand. The faithful mastiff flew where his master pointed, thinking that something had been cast thither, and that by bringing it he should be still more entitled to a reward. Meanwhile, the man bestowed the sop upon the dog of foreign breed.—I assure you this is not a fable. I witnessed it myself, and, as I told you, I was much provoked.

*Reu.* I should not like to be on friendly terms with such a man.

*Art.—(Aside.)*—How childish!—Come. The Emperor expects you. [*Exeunt* Art. *and* Reu.

*Otto.* Well! What think you of it?

*Cun.* I pity the poor animal.

*Otto.* Heaven bless you for it! A blessing suits you well, who are so shortly to be married.

*Cun.* Let us not talk of that.

*Otto.* Oh yes! I beseech you, let us have a little conversation on this subject. It is my dearest entertainment, and you were formerly so kind as to pay some attention to my artless words. Do you remember my visits with my father, while you dwelt in Suabia? I used to bear you to my father, in my arms—and you gave him a kiss—and me one.

*Cun.* I was then but very young.

*Otto.* Is it then really true? Are you betrothed to Ottocar?

*Cun.—(Sorrowfully.)*—Yes.

*Otto.* Indeed!—Now, by Heaven, the more I think of this, the more am I incensed. Is this acting like a man? —I will not say like a prince; for a good man, who is not a prince, acts far more nobly than a prince, who is not a man.

*Cun.* To what do you refer?

*Otto.* With permission, gracious lady, when do your nuptials take place?

*Cun.* Alas! very soon.

*Otto.* Alas! How! Are you dissatisfied?

*Cun.—(Looks at him in suspence for some time.)*—Noble, friendly Otto, will you not deride a poor girl's confidence?

*Otto.* Forbid it heaven!

*Cun.* I must unbosom my distress to some compassionate friend; for though my burden will not be lighter because another knows how much I bear, yet may he strengthen me

by kind persuasion. Tell me—is it not dreadful that I am compelled to leave my native land, and live with a foreign Prince, who may, perhaps, consider me as the mere scourge of his existence?—*(Weeps.)*—Why am I not allowed to have a German husband?

*Otto.* Thou sweet celestial being!—Nay, do not weep.—"Why am I not allowed to have a German husband?"—A noble declaration! By the God of Heaven, a noble declaration.—Now, hear me. I will return your confidence.—Have you patience to listen to me?

*Cun.* Proceed, I pray you.

*Otto.* You know I always was your father's friend.

*Cun.* You were indeed. The whole world knows it. At the peril of your life you paved his way to the imperial throne.

*Otto.* That is nothing. I was his friend before he thought of the imperial throne. While he was but the Duke of Suabia, he once said to me—it is, perhaps, three years ago:—"Otto, I am much indebted to you. Were I possessed of large domains, you should perceive that you have not lavished your friendship on an ingrate."—This was the answer I returned: "Philip, dukedoms and principalities cannot repay my friendship. Affection can alone requite affection."

*Cun.* That was noble, Otto—truly noble.

*Otto.* Hear what your father further said. "And now, Otto, let me give you some proof of my sincerity. My Cunigunda will make any man happy. You are a widower." He then gave me his hand, and added: "Remain, my friend, and you may be my son." Was not that noble, too?

*Cun.* My father—

*Otto.* Said those very words,—and solemn words they were.—They inflamed my courage, and inspired me with delightful hope.

*Cun.* And now—

*Otto.* I see that I was led by a mere *ignis fatuus* into a morass. I will not ask you what you think, for one of two duties must suppress your speech—truth, or filial affection. But what your father thinks I much should like to know—Blue knight, thou wert not a liar, though thou wert a villain.—Tell me—should you have been sorry, had your father kept his promise?

*Cun.* No.

*Otto.* No! Heaven bless the artless heart, which dictated this no!—Well, I am a man, and must not whimper like a child.—I will suppose your father made a mistake in the name. Beatrice is a good girl, too.

*Cun.* My sister!

*Otto.* See! There she comes.

*Enter* BEATRICE.

*Bea.* Welcome, Count Palatine! You must have ridden fast indeed. You scarcely can have seen Bavaria.

*Otto.* I staid there just long enough to observe that matrimony is a blessing. While at Wittelsbach I found that my two sons wanted a mother. I myself should like again to see a fire upon my hearth.—You knew my boys some time ago,—they are much grown since then. One is thus high—the other thus. They promise to be heroes, I assure you.

*Bea.* They are their father's children.

*Otto.* And she who is willing to become their mother, never will repent it. Do you believe this?

*Bea.* I do, indeed. Were I a mother, I should not wish for better children.

*Otto.* But a better man for their father?

*Bea.* A better than you! You certainly deserve the best of wives.

*Otto.* Beware, lovely Beatrice, lest I take you at your

word—Now will I to your father. Should your ears tingle, think of me.—God be with you. [*Exit.*

*Bea.* What means the Count Palatine? His looks were so significant.—

*Cun.* I fear some difference will take place between our father and the Count.—Sister, three years ago, my father promised Otto that one of us should be his wife.

*Bea.* One of us!

*Cun.* So he says. It cannot be my lot, for Ottocar has sent a messenger to urge my speedy departure. You, too, will lose him, for the Duke of Brunswick has signified his wish to marry you. My father told me this, himself, and seemed most highly gratified.

*Bea.* Heavens! How dreadful, to bestow our hands on men we never saw!

*Cun.* Dreadful indeed!

*Bea.* But will the Count Palatine so easily release my father from his promise? I do not think it.

*Cun.* Say, rather, sister, that you do not hope it.

*Bea.* Well, if it were left to you to chuse a husband from the men you know, whom would you chuse?

*Cun.* Otto of Wittelsbach.—But, dearest sister, let us converse no longer on this subject. The daughters of a humble knight are happier far than we are. They may consult their hearts, while in us such conduct is a crime.—Come! Let us walk into the garden, and relieve our minds.

*Bea.* Yes, and talk of that happiness, which we never shall enjoy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Emperor's Audience-chamber.*

PHILIP, REUSS, *and* ARTENBERG, *are discovered.*

*Phi.* So Heaven be with you, good Sir Frederick! When my daughter shall become Duke Otto's bride, expect a valuable present from me.

*Reu.* I thank your Majesty.

*Enter* OTTO.

*Otto.* Be not offended at my intrusion. My eagerness to see you, would not allow me to tarry in the anti-chamber.

*Phi.* Welcome, Count Palatine!—*(To Reuss.)*—Once more, assure the Duke of Brunswick of my friendship, and farewel.

*Reu.* Heaven protect your Majesty!

[*Exeunt* Reu. *and* Art.

*Otto.* Have I lost my senses? "Assure the Duke of Brunswick of my friendship." Tell me, I beseech you, whether I am deaf.

*Phi.* No, Count. You exactly repeat what I said.

*Otto.* Peace is concluded, then, between you and Brunswick's Otto?

*Phi.* Peace and friendship.

*Otto.* I wish you joy. But it would have been as well, if you had given me notice of this union. I might have saved a great expense in preparations for the next campaign.

*Phi.* How could I? Otto's first messenger arrived to-day.—how fare the Duke and Duchess of Bavaria?

*Otto.* Lewis sends greeting to the Emperor Philip. He is an active young man. He has founded an hospital at Munich for the relief of his infirm subjects, and done other things which will promote the welfare of his principality.

*Phi.* These are the good effects of peace. I too will now devote my mind to them.

*Otto.* And I, my liege. I will convert my armour into culinary vessels. This helmet will make a goodly pipkin—but hold! I had forgotten there were all these holes in it. Well, well! My head has been pieced—why not my helmet? My household will, no doubt, be well conducted, for your Majesty has most bounteously provided towards it.

*Phi.* I!

*Otto.* Yes, you. If I must remind you of it, you must allow Otto of Wittelsbach to converse with Philip of Suabia. Will you do that?

*Phi.* Yes.

*Otto.* Enough! You no longer need my aid. Your throne is firm—your enemies are fallen. My sons now claim the attention of their father. They are a bond, by which I have engaged to give the world two men. To perform this duty I will retire to Wittelsbach, but not without a companion. Since my eighteenth year I have been accustomed to this wandering restless life, and must have some one, whose society will make me relish home. You promised I should marry Cunigunda. Give me her.

*Phi.* Are you serious?

*Otto.* In truth your question is the first joke, which has entered my mind. Shall I call your jester?

*Phi.* Well, Otto! I cannot give you Cunigunda.

*Otto.* Why not!

*Phi.* She is betrothed to Ottocar.

*Otto.* And is that right? Why not fulfil your promise? Have I deviated from mine? Have I not ever been your friend?

*Phi.* Yes, but all the conquests you have gained for me are not so conducive to the general welfare, as this union of my daughter with Duke Ottocar. You, who have so often risked your life for me, cannot think my happiness and a whole empire's peace too dearly bought by such a trifling sacrifice.

*Otto.* I am not a sighing love-sick swain. Though it hurts me, I will be silent, and reckon it among the wounds, which time and medicine have healed. But why was all this done unknown to me? He, who can reconcile this secrecy with any good intention, must be indeed a master

of the black art.—I hate smooth glossy speech. Good honest sentiments require no ornament. It is base metal only to which we strive by art to give the semblance of gold—the sterling gold we leave with its own colour.—No more of this, I beg no more! I'll try to erase it from my memory.

*Phi.* My friend! My noble Otto! I cannot reward you, but be assured I will be grateful.

*Otto.* 'Tis well. Refuse not, then, what I so much desire. I ask not for reward or proof of gratitude, but beg it as a pledge of your esteem and friendship.

*Phi.* What is your wish?

*Otto.* To be your son-in-law. Your promise justifies my wish. Give me your younger daughter.

*Phi.* How!—You are too late, my dearest Otto. Her hand is promised to the Duke of Brunswick, that his friendship may be firmly rooted.

*Otto.* Now, by the God of Heaven I would not feel as you feel now, if I could thereby gain a saint's preferment. Oh integrity, behold thy recompence.—Philip, trace back the last ten years.

*Phi.* You have been my friend and I yours, as I still am. Ask of me any thing within the scope of possibility—(*Aside.*) Where is Artenberg?

*Otto.* Why is it impossible to grant what I demand? I am a prince's son. Where is the German, who can say his race is nobler? Once more—trace back the last ten years.

*Phi.* It is too late. Nay, were my younger daughter disengaged, you could not marry her, for you have murdered a near relative of my son Ottocar.

*Otto.* True, true. I should have tamely suffered a villain to assassinate me, because that villain was—your kinsman.—Away with moderation and constraint! My

heart and tongue can brook no fetters. For the sake of your own honour, I beseech you, keep your promise. I will strengthen your army with four thousand brave Bavarians. Despise not what I say. Act not thus towards me, but keep your promise.

*Phi.* You require impossibilities.

*Otto.* Keep your promise. I am a Bavarian,—a Count of Wittelsbach, and advise you not to treat me thus.

*Phi.* You go too far. I will not bear this.—(*Aside,*)—Where can Artenberg be?

*Otto.* Not bear it?—Where is Philip of Suabia, who a thousand times has pressed me to his heart—a thousand times has called me his shield and his preserver? I will impeach him as a perjured man in presence of the Emperor, and should the Emperor support him, I will sue them both before the throne of Equity; where, if their consciences be not completely callous, I will, with a single word, or with a single look, drive all their blood into their cheeks.

*Phi.* Recollect yourself, Count Palatine—then come to me again.—(*Going.*)

*Otto.* Hold! Take this helmet. I make you a present of it.

*Phi.* What am I to do with it?

*Otto.* Hide an ungrateful heart with it!—You will not? Then thus I place it on my head again, and now—strike with your utmost force upon it.

*Phi.* Away with these flighty notions, Count, and listen to me.

*Otto.* You would not hurt me, Philip, for that requires the arm of a *man*. Your sword would glance down my helmet, leaving my head untouched—yet, Philip, you have rent my heart in twain.

*Phi.* Hear me, hear your friend!

*Otto.* Which of you is my friend? Duke Philip or the Emperor.

*Phi.* Both, or you had not dared to say thus much.

*Otto.* Not dared! What! Would you bind my tongue? By Heaven, as long as I can think, I'll speak my thoughts. Truth is not to be silenced by an Emperor—nor am I. My tongue is subject only to the Almighty.

*Phi.* Otto, methinks it would be better if you would accept a recompence from me.

*Otto.* What recompence?

*Phi.* You have heard of the Duke of Poland's daughter. You must—for fame has spread her rare accomplishments and beauty through the world. Princes and nobles sue for her hand.

*Otto.* What do you mean? I know it! She is mentioned as the emblem of perfection! I have often wished to see this paragon.

*Phi.* Only to see her! But to see her, is to love her.—How glorious would it be, if Otto of Wittelsbach, the first of German princes in renown and glory, were to bear away this costly prize from all his rivals—and he may.

*Otto.*—*(Sarcastically.)*—You would promise me the Duke of Poland's daughter too?

*Phi.* I can and do. You know her father's neighbours are too turbulent; he scarcely can retain possession of his realms. My alliance would assist him much, and if you led his army, your very name would strike his foes with terror. If my proposal suit you, a letter from me shall procure for you a reception the most friendly at the Duke of Poland's court. I will request him to view you as myself, or as my son.

*Otto.* All this, Philip, does not justify your conduct towards me. It is not right; it is—*infamous*. Thus much, and no more. I will away to Poland. Give me a part of your army, that I may not go like a knight-errant.

*Phi.* Part of my army you shall have.

*Otto.* Prepare the letter to the Duke then, while I give orders for my departure. Forget not, I beg, to say what kind of man I am. Say that I have nothing of the fox in my nature, and that I hate deceit. Say, too, I am not a puppet to be danced by wires, even though an Emperor be the shew-man.—In short say I am a man, sprung from the Princes of Bavaria. [*Exit.*

*Phi.* Thanks to my patience for having not forsaken me. A single word would have roused his fury to the utmost. I know his choleric temper.

*Enter* ARTENBERG.

Where have you been?

*Art.* In the anti-chamber, my liege.

*Phi.* Did you hear our conversation?

*Art.* If it be a crime, your majesty may punish me. I endeavoured to remove the centinels from the door, for the Count Palatine was so loud——

*Phi.* Ay, loud and turbulent.

*Art.* As usual.

*Phi.* And to my sorrow I must own he spoke like a man, who deeply felt that he was injured. I ought to have reflected sooner, for he deserves far better treatment. I am ashamed of my conduct towards him, for though my empire's welfare claimed my care, yet should my friend—

*Art.* The Emperor's dearest friend is his country.

*Phi.* And merits he not thanks, who saves this friend from ruin?

*Art.* Surely. Does not Count Otto lose all claim to gratitude, when he demands that for himself which can alone preserve the empire?—Did you accuse him of Count Wenzel's murder?

*Phi.* I did, and am ashamed of having done it. We know that Wenzel fell upon him like a base assassin.

*Art.* I beseech your Majesty not to harbour any scruples on this subject. Could the Count Palatine have gained a peace like this by arms? Never. 'Tis true, your army conquered under him, and he subdued your enemies, but was not your strength thereby diminished? Did not the whole empire bleed? In short, a longer war would have been an evil to all except Count Otto, who would have written his exploits on the tablet of futurity, with the blood of your subjects. He is galled that his ambition should be checked in the midst of his career.——My zeal for your Majesty's security and welfare may perhaps lead me beyond the bounds of reverence, but even your anger is not so dreadful to me as the danger which now threatens you.

*Phi.* What danger?

*Art.* Can your Majesty imagine that Otto will tamely submit to treatment which he thinks the grossest insult?—You know his haughty temper, and remember his last words. "I am not a puppet to be danced by wires, even though an *Emperor* be the shew-man."

*Phi.* Can these words have the meaning which you give them?

*Art.* Say rather, can they have any other? I saw him before your conference with the Duke of Brunswick's ambassador? Nay, he travelled hither in company with him. Could this be merely by accident? I trembled at the door, when your majesty promised—

*Phi.* You are right, Artenberg. Your fears are not unfounded. He spoke those words with a tone, which betrayed an inward thirst after vengeance. But what can I do? He expects the letter to the Duke of Poland.

*Art.* That letter is your only resource.

*Phi.* Resource! How so?

*Art.* Let it be couched in terms which will avert all danger.

*Phi.* Be more explicit.

*Art.* Request the Duke of Poland to receive Count Otto most graciously.

*Phi.* Well?

*Art.* But at the same time warn him not to trust the Count with any great command, and by no means to bestow his daughter on him till he has thoroughly tried his disposition.

*Phi.* And then I can request him to satisfy the Count in some other way. Go, Artenberg, go prepare the letter, as you mention. [*Exit* Art.

My heart tells me that this conduct is not right, but policy commands it. Otto feels I have injured him, and it is dangerous to confide in an injured friend. His greatness, too, throws a shade upon my dignity. I must remove him from my court. The sight of him is irksome to me, for his every look seems to declare I am his debtor.

END OF ACT II.

## *ACT III.*

SCENE, *An Apartment in* REUSS's *Castle.*

*Enter* STEWARD *and* WALLRICH.

*Stew.* But never mind that. Though Sir Frederick be from home, you and your horse shall not want accomodation till he arrives. We expect him every minute. If he come not soon, he will find two eyes closed for ever, which are dearer to him than his own, for our lady is dangerously ill. Sir Frederick is transacting some treaty between Otto of Brunswick and Philip of Suabia. I understand it relates to a peace.

*Wal.* Indeed!

*Stew.* Heaven grant a peace may take place! The empire has suffered more than enough by this contention for the crown. When the bear and the wolf dispute about the sheep,—who fares worst? The sheep. I should like to know which of the two will give way, for one of them must. (*A cry of* "Welcome! Welcome home!" *is heard without.*)

*Enter* REUSS.

Welcome home, sir knight. This stranger wishes to see you, before he proceeds on his journey.

*Wal.*—(*Presents his hand to* Reuss.)—Heaven bless Sir Frederick of Reuss! My name is Hans Wallrich. I am an imperial herald, and bring you tidings of your son from Palestine.

*Reu.* My George! Is he well! Is he an honour to his country?

*Wal.* That is he, noble knight—an honour to his country and his father.

*Reu.* My blessing be upon him!—You have brought reviving news for my sick wife.—(*To the* Steward.)—Go and enquire whether she be asleep. [*Exit* Steward. I sincerely thank you for these happy tidings.

*Wal.* Your son, sir knight, is much beloved by all who know him, and his courage is proverbial.

*Reu.* Heaven protect him.

*Re-enter* STEWARD.

*Stew.* The attendant thinks my lady ought not to be waked. She has not slept so soundly since you left us.—(*A bell is heard.*)—

*Reu.* See what that means.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* Five or six horsemen are hastening hither.

*Reu.* Go, and inquire who they are, and if you know their names, admit them. [*Exeunt* Stew. *and* Ser. Many a time have I stood at a window of my castle, when a knight has been approaching, and always have I said: "Would it were my George, or at least some knight who brings me tidings of him!" Once more accept a father's thanks. You are most welcome.

*Enter* OTTO.

*Otto.* Good day to you, Sir Frederick! Will you admit a pilgrim?

*Reu.* Scarcely can I credit what I see! Count Palatine, how did you stumble on my hut?

*Otto.* I am a kind of riding vagrant. I hurry headlong through my life, and shall not find a resting place till death has hurled me from my saddle.

*Reu.* I am truly glad to see you. I will first make some inquiries after my sick wife, and then return to pledge you in a smiling goblet.—Count Otto, I leave you with Hans Wallrich, who has brought me tidings of my son from Palestine. [*Exit.*

*Otto.* Come you straight from Palestine?

*Wal.* No. I have been two months in Poland.

*Otto.* How fares the Duke of Poland?

*Wal.* But ill, Count Palatine. The two Canutes of Sweden and Denmark harass him incessantly. Both sue for his daughter's hand, and each has exerted his utmost power to counteract his rival's wishes, till at length the Princess has discarded both, and now both have attacked the father, who cannot, without foreign aid, oppose them.

*Otto.* Foreign aid! Ha!——But, tell me—is his daughter so beautiful as Fame describes her?

*Wal.* Count Palatine, her charms and virtues baffle all description. What fame says of her is a mere nothing. Alas! her gentle soul is sinking under the pressure of her father's lamentable situation. Happy is the man, who can redeem him from it, for on him has she resolved to bestow her hand and heart.

*Otto.* Ha!—I rejoice to hear it.—Who commands the Duke of Poland's army?

*Wal.* He himself. In courage and experience he is by no means wanting; but Fortune ever flies his banner.

*Enter* REUSS, *followed by a boy, bearing silver goblets, and a large flask of wine.*

*Reu.* Boy, fill a goblet to the brim. Welcome to my

house, Count Otto of Wittelsbach!—*(Drinks.)*—Welcome, Hans Wallrich!—*(Drinks.)*

*Otto.* Heaven bless you and yours!—*(Drinks.)*

*Wal.* Heaven bless you and yours, sir knight!—*(Drinks.)* *(The boy fills the goblets, leaves them and the flask, and goes.)*

*Otto.* Sir Frederick, I told you, while at Aix, what happened between Philip and myself.

*Reu.* Yes—that he broke his promise.

*Otto.* You are right. He can have no sufficient apology for forfeiting his word, but we will try to make the deed not quite so bad, by saying I have been wronged, in order to promote the welfare of the empire. This will sound like lawful coin, and every one will take it, because it is stamped with the image of the Emperor.—Well! this worthy man has made me more satisfied with what has happened. I may, perhaps, succeed in relieving the Duke of Poland, and winning his fair daughter's hand and heart.

*Wal.* Success attend you, noble Count! The enterprize is worthy of you.

*Reu.* What is the Princess's name?

*Wal.* Helica.

*Reu.*—*(Takes a goblet.)*—Otto and Helica! Long life and happiness to both!—*(Drinks.)*

*Wal.* With all my heart.—*(Drinks.)*

*Otto.* Thanks, thanks, my friends.—The Emperor has given me a letter, which will procure for me a reception the most friendly from the Duke of Poland.

*Reu.* Rely not on his recommendation. Has he not deceived you once?

*Otto.* He has; but Philip's sentiments are noble—they were, at least; and surely the imperial crown cannot have altered them. What a miserable shuttlecock were he, if his virtue depended on a spangle! I know a diadem does not exalt the wearer's sentiments, but why should it degrade

them?—*(Takes a goblet.)*—To the health of the Emperor Philip!—*(Drinks.)*

*Wal.* I pledge you, Count Palatine.—*(Drinks.)*

*Reu.* To the health of Lewis, Duke of Bavaria!—*(Drinks.)*

*Otto.* That is not right, Sir Frederick. You ought to pay respect to him whose health I drank. What have you to urge against the Emperor.

*Reu.* When I was sent by Brunswick's Otto, he received me haughtily, and spoke with disrespect of his noble rival, whose birth and courage do not yield to his. Otto would not have done so, had I come from Philip. A German knight allows no Emperor to treat him with contempt, for he is only Emperor, because it is our will he should be so. This, Count Palatine, I never shall forget till some creditable act banishes it from my memory.

*Enter* WOLF.

*Wolf.* My noble lord, the seal of the great letter you committed to my care at Aix has melted in my bosom. It is not my fault, but the fault of the warm weather.

*Otto.* Give me the letter.—It is open.

*Wolf.* Or the reverse, if no one opens it. I have had many a letter in my hand, but the seal was not the only reason why I did not read them.

*Reu.* What else?

*Wolf.* I can't read.

*Otto.*—*(Opens the letter.)*—Sir Frederick, as you doubt the good intentions of the Emperor, read that letter.

*Enter* STEWARD.

*Stew.* Sir knight, a messenger is just arrived from Bam-

berg, who states that the Emperor Philip yesterday arrived there, and has appointed a tournament to-day.

*Wal.* I must begone, then, that I may resume my office as a herald. Farewell, Sir Frederick.

*Reu.* Farewell! once more, I thank you.

*Wal.* Count Palatine, success be with you in your undertaking!

*Otto.* I thank you. [*Exit* Wal. This is strange. When I left Aix, no one had heard that Philip meant to visit Bamberg.—But read, Sir Frederick.

[*Exeunt* Wolf *and* Stew.

*Reu.*—(*Reads.*)—"Philip, by the Grace of God holy Roman Emperor sends greeting to the Duke of Poland.—Whereas the Bavarian Count Palatine Otto of Wittelsbach has humbly petitioned his imperial majesty to introduce and recommend him to the Duke of Poland."—

*Otto.* How! Humbly petitioned! The Emperor did not read it thus.

*Reu.* Count Palatine, if any thing further should occur, which the Emperor did not read to you, I beg you to believe that every word is as I read it.

*Otto.* Enough! Proceed.

*Reu.* "And whereas the aforementioned Count Palatine Otto of Wittelsbach is a valiant warrior, and has gained renown in various battles and sieges, his imperial majesty hereby requests the Duke of Poland to receive him kindly and to use his valour and experience as may seem meet to his Royal Highness."

*Otto.* What?——But proceed, proceed.

*Reu.* "The Duke of Poland is, however, at the same time cautioned not to entrust any important command to the Count Palatine, and by no means to bestow on him the hand of his accomplished daughter."

*Otto.* Ha! Ha! Ha!—Proceed.

*Reu.* Heavens!

*Otto.* Read on, read on, read on!

*Reu.* "Accomplished daughter, as the Count Palatine has a disposition much inclined to discord and rebellion.

*Otto.* Damnation!

*Reu.* "Yet it is adviseable that the Duke should not at first seem inimical to the wishes of the Count, but awhile encourage them. The Duke is likewise hereby desired not to disclose the contents of this letter, as he values the friendship of his imperial majesty.—Given at our court at Aix. "Philip."

*Otto.* Philip!—Be Philip the triumphant cry in Hell, when an ungrateful wretch is damned. Give me the letter. Oh that I could write these words in fire upon the azure sky, that all mankind might read them, and the eternal curse of human nature brand the ingrate!—*(Putting the letter in his bosom.)*—I'll wear thee thus within my corselet, and my heart shall drink thy poison.

*Reu.* Your rage is just. This conduct is most infamous. Towards you, too! Such a man and such a Prince! By Heaven, it calls aloud for vengeance.

*Otto.* Vengeance! Oh, every drop of blood now boiling in these veins would fire the frame of apathy. But, what can I do more than take his life? To the honest man there are many greater misfortunes than death, but to the villain none—and what is death?

*Reu.* You may find other means of vengeance. Know you the Duke of Brunswick?

*Otto.* Would he have acted thus?

*Reu.* No, on my honour. Count Palatine, your forbearance has been hitherto astonishing. That Philip, after promising to you his eldest daughter, should betroth her and her sister without your concurrence; that without your concurrence he should make peace with foes, whom you

alone have humbled, is treatment too contemptuous to be borne. What had Philip been without your aid? Did you not assist him with your kinsman's friendship, and Bavaria's strength? Have you not fought and bled for him? Your reward was glory and renown, and this reward excites his envy.

*Otto.* Ha!—Now do I see the man in his true shape! Thou envious double-tongued, ungrateful villain!—Heavens and earth! When I think my undesigning nature has been thus abused, I could go mad. I have subdued my disposition, checked my pride and warmth, and taught myself to bear what, as I thought, was intended to promote my country's good. But now, thou wolfish monster,—now thou hast thyself cast off the sheep's skin, hast darted thy claws into my heart,—into my honour.

*Reu.* Count Palatine, offer this injured heart to Brunswick's Otto. On my soul you will be more welcome far than Philip's daughter. The nuptials are not celebrated.

*Otto.* No more, Sir Frederick! You too mistake Bavarian Otto. Shall my vengeance rouse fell discord from her slumber, and expose the empire to new dangers? Heaven knows that when I helped to shed the blood of enemies I thought not of myself or of renown, but the justice of the cause which I defended. The empire has not injured me, but Philip.—Friend, can you fit me with a suit of armour?

*Reu.* For what purpose?

*Otto.* I will away to Bamberg, and appal the ingrate.—Lend me a suit of armour.

*Reu.* You may chuse one in my armoury. I would willingly accompany you, but my sick wife—

*Otto.* No more, I do beseech you.—How far am I from Bamberg?

*Reu.* Four miles.

*Otto.* 'Tis well.—Death and damnation! Am I thus rewarded? Otto inclined to discord and rebellion! Liar! Liar! Liar! I defy the world to prove me guilty of one ignoble thought.—Come, give me a suit of armour.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in the old Palace at Bamberg.*

*Enter* PHILIP *with his suite. He seats himself in a chair of state beneath a canopy.* ARTENBERG, *and other nobles of the court stand on each side.*

*Wall.*—*(Approaches the Emperor.)*—The king of Bohemia's ambassadors await your Majesty's command.

*Phi.* Conduct them hither.

*Enter two Ambassadors.*

I should have been happy had I seen King Ottocar at my court, but I find the situation of his country will not allow his absence, and must therefore content myself with the hope of embracing him as my son-in-law at some future period. My daughter Cunigunda is ready to depart with you, but you will, of course, remain at my court during the three days I have appointed for exercise in chivalry.—With regard to the other object of your mission, I sympathize in King Ottocar's distresses at the death of his kinsman Count Wenzel; but it is not in my power to inflict any punishment on the perpetrator of the act, as the Duchess of Bavaria, who is as nearly related to your sovereign as the deceased, assures me, by letter, that Count Wenzel attacked Count Otto in an unwarrantable manner.—You are now

allowed to visit your future Queen. Waldburg, conduct them to my daughter Cunigunda.

[*Exeunt* Wald. *and* Amb.

*Enter* HENRY *and* EGBERT.

*Hen.* My gracious liege, we beg leave to congratulate you on your arrival in this country.

*Egb.* And our Duke unites with us in this congratulation.

*Phi.* I thank both him and you.—You are welcome, and I hope you will break a lance at the tournament.—(*Rises.*) When the spectators are assembled, let the signal be given, and I will appear.—Artenberg, remain.

[*Exeunt all but* Philip *and* Art.

Oh Artenberg, I never was so uneasy as I am to-day.—Why comes not Ottocar in person for my daughter? The Duke of Brunswick, too, seems not to take any further notice of me, though in order to effect an interview with him I removed hither. This coldness on the part of both the Princes indicates—

*Art.* Excuse my interruption, but your Majesty may rest assured that the same policy, which induced them to make overtures, will induce them also to retain your friendship.

*Phi.* Yes, as long as they perceive my forces are superior to their own, but should any of my princely defenders cease to support my interest, they will be the first to turn their arms once more against me,—and one of these princely warriors has forsaken me.

*Art.* How so, my liege?

*Phi.* The Count Palatine has always been a bulwark to me.—Oh Artenberg, give me back the letter. Otto is my thought from morn to night. If I see a sword, a helmet, or any thing which wears a warlike appearance, I think of

Otto. What has he done, that I should treat him thus? Why should I banish him without a cause? Every thing occurred to me except his crime.

*Art.* And I cannot discover his punishment. You have but sent him to earn renown in Poland, and if it be his pleasure, can he not return? Disappointment will abate his pride.—My liege, the tournament is opened.

*Phi.* What can I do there? It will afford me no delight.

*Art.* But what will the knights think if you refuse to attend a tournament, appointed by yourself?

*Enter* WALDBURG.

*Wald.* My liege, an unknown knight has just appeared before the lists, and requested of the judges a lance and a sword. Your heralds demanded his name, but he refused to answer their enquiry. To Wallrich only he opened his visor, who immediately assured the judges on his life and honour that the stranger was of noble origin. The lists were then opened, and arms delivered to him according to the cartel. Twice he rode round, greeted the assembled knights, and touched with his spear the imperial scutcheon.

*Phi.* My scutcheon! Does he not thereby mean to challenge me?

*Art.* Not so, my liege. As the tournament was appointed for amusement by your Majesty, he means thereby to challenge all your knights.

*Wald.* So think the judges.

*Phi.* Enough! I am sorry I cannot be there, for I really am not well, and dare not venture into the open air. My presence will not now be so much missed, as the stranger will occupy the attention of the spectators. When the tournament is closed, conduct the knights hither that the prizes may be distributed. [*Exit* Wald

The stranger bids defiance to my knights. Oh that the Count Palatine were here to check his arrogance!

*Art.* Allow me to accept his challenge.

*Phi.* No, Artenberg, stay with me, for I have much need of you. I was in hopes that when I had provided for my daughters I should have been at ease, but alas, I am far more discontented than I was before. I have now nothing more to hope, and hope is to a man what a crutch is to a cripple.—Artenberg, endeavour to gain the confidence of the Bohemian ambassadors. You may, perhaps, through them, become acquainted with the real sentiments of Ottocar. His near connexion with Bavarian Lewis is very suspicious. This Prince is now the most powerful in our empire. Should the Count Palatine have thought of being revenged—

*Enter* CUNIGUNDA *and* BEATRICE.

*Both.* My father!

*Phi.* What now? Why in this haste?

*Cun.* Waldburg informed us you were unable to attend the tournament, having been attacked by sudden indisposition.

*Phi.* Waldburg has been attacked by sudden folly. Do I look ill?

*Cun.* Dearest father, do not conceal any thing from us! Your looks indeed distress us.

*Phi.* Be at ease. I am well in spite of my looks—only rather—Well, Beatrice, how do you like the tournament?

*Bea.* Oh my father, I wish you had been there. I never saw any thing like it.

*Phi.* How so?

*Bea.* An unknown adventurer bade defiance to our knights. He seemed to be a God, and broke a lance as

easily as I can break a tulip's stalk. His sword seemed to shed fire at every stroke. All the knights fought bravely, but to him it seemed mere children's play.

*Cun.* I do not know whether even the Count Palatine would be a match for him.

*Phi.* I shall be glad to know him.

*Cun.* The judges must award the first prize to him; and when I present it, I will request him to declare his name. Will you allow this, my dear father?

*Phi.* Do so.—Methinks the knights approach. Can the tournament be closed so soon?

*Bea.* Oh yes! The stranger's valour shortened it.—(Philip *stands before the chair of state under the canopy.*—Cunigunda, Beatrice, *and* Artenberg *near him.)*

*Enter* WALDBURG.

*Wald.* My liege, they come.

*Enter* WALLRICH *and other imperial heralds, followed by four judges of the tilts. The prizes, which consist of a golden sword, helmet, spurs, coat of mail, and belt, are borne on cushions. The judges are followed by the knights and guests, among whom is* OTTO.

*Wal.*—(*Approaches* Philip.)—Most gracious sovereign, the tournament appointed by your majesty for the manly exercise of your knights is closed according to the cartel.

*Phi.* My worthy knights and nobles, I return you thanks. Herald, perform your office.—(*The emperor seats himself.—Two judges of the tilts approach* Cunigunda, *with the golden helmet and sword. The one takes his place at her right, the other at her left hand. A herald approaches. Flourish of drums and trumpets.)*

*Her.* The first prize is awarded to the valiant unknown knight in silver armour.—(Otto *steps forward.*)—The judges having decreed that, in this day's tournament, you have excelled all your competitors, in breaking the lance, the gracious Princess Cunigunda will present to you the first reward of the lance.—(Cun. *takes the helmet from the cushion, and presents it to* Otto.)

*Otto.* Gracious Princess, I return you thanks.—*(The Emperor is alarmed at the sound of his voice.)*

*Her.* The judges having decreed that, in this day's tournament, you have likewise excelled all your competitors in the exercise of the sword, the gracious Princess will present to you the first reward of the sword.

*Cun.* Noble knight, if you have made no vow to remain concealed, I pray you let me know to whom I now present the first reward of the sword.

*Art.*—*(Approaches.)*—The Emperor joins in the request.

*Otto.* I obey.—*(Opens his visor, and casts his first look on* Philip.)

*All.* The Count Palatine! Otto!

*Otto.* Am I really the Count Palatine, Otto of Wittelsbach.—(Philip *turns pale, and tries in vain to suppress his alarm. A sudden tremor seizes him, and his daughters, who perceive it, run to him and embrace him.)*

*Cun.* My father!

*Bea.* Oh, you are very ill.

*Phi.* Away!—*(Springs up, and goes towards the door, led by his daughters.)*

*Art.* and *Wald.* Make way! Make way!

[*Exeunt* Phi. Cun. Bea. Art. *and* Wald.

*Otto.* Ay, run, run, thou dignified monster. Couldst thou hide thyself and all thy majesty within the compass of a nut-shell, I would find thee.

*Wal.* Count Otto, what is your opinion of this sudden attack?

*Otto.* A brize, perhaps, has stung the Emperor's brain. Tell the knights that nothing further will be done to-day.—(Wallrich *converses with the knights, &c. who, by degrees, depart in groups.* Otto *walks to and fro, till the apartment is quite empty.)*—Villany is not in his nature, or he would not have been thus affected. The rack of conscience forced confession from him. But, if a look could thus disorder him, what will a word effect—a word spoken with the warm sensation of injured integrity—I will verify what thou hast written, ingrate. I will fill thy mind with discord and rebellion, stir up its faculties against each other, and turn thy utmost fury on thyself, by brandishing before thy eyes the flaming sword of truth.

*Enter* HENRY, *hastily.*

*Hen.—(Draws out the letter.)*—Brother! Brother! This is infamous.

*Otto.* Infamous! most infamous! Oh that I had the voice of thunder! All the world should know how Otto has been injured and insulted. Give me the letter. 'Tis a talisman, which rouses my whole being into fury. What am I doing here?—Farewell, brother.

*Enter* EGBERT.

*Egb.* Welcome, Otto! What is the matter? Your voice, as I approached, resounded dreadfully.

*Otto.* At another time!—Let me pass.

*Egb.* Otto! My brother! Stay, for Heaven's sake.—Wolf says you have been much insulted. Who can have dared?—

*Otto.* Philip of Suabia.

*Egb.* The Emperor!

*Otto.* Philip of Suabia.

*Egb.* Say the Emperor, brother.

*Otto.* Offer up your prayers for the Emperor,—I will, meanwhile converse with Philip of Suabia. Egbert, thou art a prophet. Dost thou recollect thy words, when I took leave of thee at Braunaw? "Otto, methinks some mighty deed awaits thee."—Mighty the deed is not, but horrible.

*Egb.* What mean you, brother?

*Otto.* I have been deceived, imposed upon, insulted.

*Hen.* By the friend, for whom so often he has risked his life—by Philip.

*Otto.* My reward is calumny.

*Egb.* Calumny.

*Otto.* Foul calumny.

*Hen.* And contempt.

*Otto.* Read, brother.—*(Gives him the letter.)*—My nature made it easy to impose on me. I, like a fool, trusted a man, who once had broken his promise. How could I suspect deceit in him, for whom my disinterested friendship has already done so much, and was willing to do so much more? Even my claims upon his daughter, which were founded on a promise the most sacred, I renounced, because his welfare was far nearer to my heart than was my own.

*Egb.—(After having read the letter.)*—Brother, this is an unheard of insult.

*Otto.* Does it not cry aloud for vengeance?

*Hen.* For blood.

*Otto.—(Starts.)*—Blood!

*Egb.* Heaven have mercy on thee, brother? Thou hast uttered a most dreadful word. Reflect—he is the Emperor, the sacred head of the holy Roman empire.

*Hen.* Go to mass Egbert, and pray for the—

*Otto.* He is the Emperor? Dost thou mean thereby to remind me of my duty and respect. All Germany bears witness to my unshaken loyalty and active zeal in the pro-

tection of the imperial diadem.—But, is this an action which becomes an Emperor? To impose upon and basely injure his most faithful friend—Otto of Wittelsbach—a Count Palatine!—Native Bavaria, I will bring no disgrace upon thy Princes.—Brothers, farewel. My injured heart demands redress. I go to place before the eyes of Philip his most ignominious conduct in its ugliest shape.

*Hen.* He will not regard your words.

*Otto.* Then will I appeal to the assembled Princes of the empire. My voice is of some consequence, and Germany never will allow her crown to be profaned by this deceitful, villanous, ungrateful man.

*Hen.* Brother, rely not upon that. Justice is not at all times proof against a bribe.

*Otto.* Well, then—my best resource is left, my honest staunch Bavarians. I know they love me, and will cheerfully repay each drop of blood, which I have shed for them. They wrested the imperial crown from Brunswick's Otto, and placed it on the head of perjured Philip.—How, if they were now to turn their arms against him?—Philip, thou hast loosened the foundation of thy throne. Thou hast trodden on the lion, who has guarded thee, who so often has besmeared his mane with the blood of thy enemies. Fool! Fool! Fool! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Emperor's Apartment.*

Philip *is discovered on a couch, and* Artenberg *sitting near him.*

*Phi.* 'Tis well the surgeon thought it right to breathe a vein. It will now be generally believed that I was attacked by sudden indisposition. Do you think the guests observed I was alarmed at his appearance?

*Art.* It was evident to all that your majesty turned pale and trembled.—Your alarm seemed to augment the pride of the Count Palatine more than a victory. "I am the man, who can appal the Emperor with a single look." Thus boasts he now.

*Phi.* Ha!—Damnation! I will follow your advice, and oppose my dignity to this overbearing arrogance, which condescension but increases.—Go in search of him. Pry into his motive for returning, but be upon your guard, when you converse with him:—send Waldburg hither.—*(Exit* Art.)—Artenberg is right. I will no longer reply to his defiance with submission, to his pride with condescension—else will his haughty temper rise so high, that my Imperial dignity will lose its consequence.

*Enter* WALDBURG.

Come hither, Waldburg. We will proceed in our game.—*(Seat themselves to play at chess.)*—I like my situation. It was your turn.

*Wald.* That move relieves me.—There!

*Phi.* It does indeed.—What is the general opinion respecting the Count Palatine?—I move my bishop thus.

*Wald.* The general opinion seems to be that he has lost your majesty's favour.

*Phi.* And the reason?

*Wald.* How!—You have made a rapid progress in the last five moves.—Who causes that confusion in the antichamber?

*Enter* OTTO, *speaking to the centinels.*

*Otto.* Do you think your halberds shall oppose my entrance?

*Phi.* Proceed, Waldburg.—(*The Emperor continues to play, but in great confusion, while* Otto *approaches the table, and silently surveys the board.)*

*Wald.* The game is mine. Your last move—

*Otto.* Yes, yes. Move your knight thus, and it is check-mate to the Emperor.—(*He does this, and overturns the piece.)*

*Phi.* What do you mean?

*Otto.* That you are mated.

*Phi.* No. I might have been relieved by—

*Otto.* Impossible, unless you threw your antagonist and chess-board out of the window. You would then have won the game in a most creditable way.

*Phi.* This is childish, Count Palatine.

*Otto.* You are mated both in body and soul.

*Phi.* Who called you? What do you want?

*Otto.* To inquire after your health. I hear you have been bled. Where is the blood? I will soon tell you what is your disorder.

*Phi.* I have a surgeon.

*Otto.* He is a fool. Your confessor should have opened a vein of your conscience.

*Phi.* Count Palatine, remember with whom you are conversing.

*Otto.* Let me exchange a few words with you in private.

[Wald. *is going.*

*Phi.* Waldburg, remain here. The Count Palatine and I have no secrets. What he has to say he may say in your presence, and let him at the same time not forget to whom he speaks.

*Otto.* Do you, then, know who *I* am? No.—Majesty no longer bears in mind the deeds of Otto.

*Phi.* Why do you not proceed to Poland?

*Otto.* Because that cold climate does not suit the warmth of my temperament.

*Phi.* Give me back my letter, then.

*Otto.* Your letter! No.

*Phi.* How! I insist upon it.

*Otto.* Here it is.—*(Holds it open before him.)*

*Phi.* Who dared to break my seal?

*Otto.* God—God himself.

*Phi.* The insult is insufferable.

*Otto.* Oh Patience, holy Patience, hold my heart-strings, lest they crack.

*Phi.* Count Palatine, do not forget yourself.

*Otto.* Happy were it for me, if I could forget who I am.

*Phi.* Give me my letter.

*Otto.* That will I not. Who are you? You say you are a man. I am one. Justice shall decide between us.—Philip, shall the duped friend, or injured Prince address you? But what is the term *friend* to you—It was your own advantage, not your heart, which taught you the word—Thou perjured Duke, I require not gratitude, but insult I will never brook. Prove that I ever was the cause of discord and rebellion. Prove that I was ever guilty of a crime against the empire or yourself. Prove this, I say, or write beneath this letter: "*The above is false.*"

*Phi.* Madman! This to thy Emperor!

*Otto.* Cursed be he, who reveres not his Emperor. But think you that you wear the sword of our great Charles to mortify the sacred dignity of Princes? Think you that a diadem can screen a shameful action? Think you that the Imperial sceptre is a talisman, which can lame by its enchantment the faculties of all mankind? Write, write, Philip! Recall this falsehood! That were better, than that I should to the assembled empire, charge you with a crime so base.

*Phi.* Peace, audacious wretch! I will arraign thee as the murderer of Wenzel and slanderer of Majesty. The last word of my favour is—*Fly!* Now, brave my indignation if thou darest, degenerate as thou art.—*(Exit with* Waldburgh *into the adjoining room.)*

*Otto.*—*(Transported with fury, strikes his breast, and calls as the Emperor goes.)*—Duke Philip!——Why should the mastiff be content to bark?—*(Draws his sword, and rushes into the adjoining room.)*

*Enter* HENRY *from the antichamber.*

*Hen.* Brother! Where is he? I heard him speak with violence.—*(Goes to the door of the next room.)*—Great God of Heaven!

*Enter* OTTO, *pale, trembling, and almost deprived of every faculty.*

*Otto.* The Emp—eror's——*(Shews his bloody sword.)*

*Hen.* Oh! Away! Away! Away!—*(Drags him away.)*

*Wald.*—*(Within.)*—Help! Help! Murder!—*(The centinels rush in with* Artenberg.*)*

*Art.* What now?

*Wal.* A surgeon! Haste! Thrice in the Emperor's breast, Count Otto—

*Art.* Quick! Quick! Pursue him.—I must send instant tidings to the Duke of Brunswick.—Pursue the murderer! Haste! [*Exit.*

*Enter* CUNIGUNDA *and* BEATRICE.

*Both.* Oh Heavens! My father.

*(The bustle and the cries increase on every side. All crowd into the adjoining room.)*

END OF ACT III.

# *ACT IV.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in the Castle of Wittelsbach.*

*Enter* OTTO.

*Otto.* Restore to me my peace of mind, Oh Wittelsbach. Thou didst witness the smiles of my brave father, when the nurse delivered me into his arms. Then should an earthquake have shattered these huge walls, and buried me beneath their ruins, that the worthy noble Berthold might not have been the father of a murderer——No, Wittelsbach. To me thou never canst restore my peace of mind. Sink, sink, and hide thy lofty turrets under the surface of the earth.

*Enter* WILIBALD *and* EDGAR.

*Wil.* God bless you, father!

*Edg.* God bless you, father!

*Wil.* Father, where does Frankfort lie?

*Otto.*—(*Points through the window.*)—Far beyond yon hills to the north.

*Wil.* Give me a horse, and a 'squire that I may go thither.

*Otto.* For what purpose?

*Wil.* Wolf says there are many Princes assembled there to determine something against you. I'll say to them: "Princes, don't do that, for my father is strong, and if you

displease him, he will kill you. You know he killed the Emperor, who was stronger than you all, and if—"

*Otto.* Hold—Begone!

*Wil.* To Frankfort?

*Otto.* Take thy bow, and shoot as many sparrows as thou canst.

*Wil.* I don't like to kill a creature no bigger than my hand.

*Edg.* I shot a sparrow in the wing this morning, and when I took it in my hand, it reminded me of you, father, for it chirped: Philip! Philip!

*Otto.* Away from me!

*Wil.* Father, give me a larger bow, that I may kill a buck.

*Otto.* Thou art not strong enough.

*Wil.* Oh yes, I am. Let me try whether I can raise your sword.—(*Attempts to draw it.*)

*Otto.* Be quiet, boy.

*Wil.*—(*Examining the sword.*)—Father! Did you kill the Emperor with this sword?

*Otto.*—(*Stamps.*)—Quit my sight, this moment, both of you! [*Exeunt* Wil. *and* Edg.
Oh conscience, conscience! —— Even the simplicity of these two boys is a reproach, a scourge to me—When in riper years they find that I could leave them nothing but an empire's curse—Oh horrible! But I will rack my soul with thoughts like this, until it says to itself: "Thou hast endured enough."

*Enter* WOLF.

*Wolf.* Oh my Lord! How do I dread the sight of any one from Frankfort!

*Otto.* Wolf, what dost thou call this deed?

*Wolf.* Revenge.

*Otto.* Murder.—Wretched, wretched is he, who comes

into this world with strength of mind and manly fire. Oh Nature, if it be thy wish to merit the title of a good mother, form no more beings with the soul or body of a man. Such are not meet for times like these—their lot can be but misery and ruin. If thou dost wish thy children's happiness, let their sinews be void of strength, their veins of warmth, their breast of feeling. Bestow upon them subtilty, a double tongue, and ever smiling countenance—then wilt thou form a proper creature for this hospital—the world——But hark! who comes?

*Enter* DUCHESS.

How, noble Duchess! Have you so little regard for your own dignity?

*Duch.* Do not, dear kinsman, be offended, that I thus surprise you; but I feel myself compelled to see you. Tell me, I beseech you—was Count Wenzel's death the cause of Philip's anger?

*Otto.* No. Philip availed himself of this pretext to give his conduct some appearance of justice, but in fact, it was my integrity which made me lose his favour. Thus it is, noble Princess. I bore the ungrateful perjured man upon my shoulders to the throne, and scarcely did he sit in state, ere he dismissed me from his side, that the world might think he had risen by his own exertions. Contempt for my fidelity, and insult for my waste of blood!—Such, such was Otto's recompence.

*Duch.* Shameful ingratitude! Count Palatine, it has laid heavy on my soul that I was the instigation of Count Wenzel's attack upon you.

*Otto.* You!

*Duch.* He roused my indignation against you by reporting that you had defamed my character. I was fool enough to credit his reports, and required him to revenge my wrongs.

My husband convinced me of my mistake when it was too late, but, Heaven be praised, that I am not the cause of the misfortunes, which have happened. Let me see your sons, dear kinsman. Where are they?

*Otto.* Wolf, bring them hither.—(*Exit* Wolf.)—Well, noble Duchess, may Bavaria hope—

*Duch.* You ask the question, probably, because I wish to see your children.—(*With a smile of satisfaction.*)—Well, if you suspect it, let me have your blessing.

*Otto.* You are doubly welcome. Otto can still rejoice. Accept my warmest wishes for your welfare—you are appointed by Heaven the mother of Bavaria's welfare.

*Duch.* Count Palatine, your disposition is truly noble and generous. How many a man would wish that I might never be a mother, if he were, like you, the heir to this proud dukedom.

*Otto.* Shame on the wretch, whose groveling soul could harbour such a thought!—See! There come my boys.

*Enter* WILIBALD *and* EDGAR.

*Duch.* Dear, lovely children!

*Wil.*—(*Gives her his hand.*)—Father, is this the mother you promised to bring us?

*Edg.*—(*The same.*)—I hope it is.

*Otto.* Boys, you remind me of every thing which tortures me. This is the Duchess, your kinsman's wife.

*Wil.* I wish she had been our mother.

*Edg.* So do I.

*Duch.* I thank you, sweet children.—(*Kisses them.*)—Count Palatine, I am going to receive my husband on his return from Frankfort. I have given orders for the erection of some tents upon the borders, where I mean to await his arrival. Will you allow me to take these children with me? You

will oblige me much by it, and in a few hours I will restore them to you.

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Oh father, let us go.

*Duch.* Grant their petition, worthy Count.

*Otto.* Take them. I know they will be in good hands.

*Duch.* Farewell, then, and come soon to Braunaw.

*Otto.* To the christening. Angels guard our Duchess!

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Father, God be with you!

*Otto.* May he protect you, my children!

[*Exeunt* Duch. *and* Boys.

*Enter* WOLF.

*Wolf.* Count, your brother Henry is arrived.

*Otto.* Where is he?

*Wolf.* He galloped into the court a few minutes since, but would not see you till the Duchess was gone. He and his horse are covered with dust and sweat, as if he had just left the field of battle.

*Otto.* Call him—

(Henry *rushes into* Otto's *arms.*)

*Hen.* Oh my brother!

*Otto.* What now, Henry?

*Hen.* My poor, proscribed, unfortunate brother!

*Wolf.* Proscribed! Oh dreadful day!

*Otto.* Henry, is sentence passed upon me?

*Hen.* It is—a sentence the most horrible.

*Otto.* The imperial ban?

*Hen.* Alas!——Yes.

*Otto.*—(*After a pause of resignation.*)—I did not think that I was born to suffer this disgrace—what did they call my crime?

*Hen.* Regicide.

*Otto.* Well, the sentence is most just. My crime may be termed regicide on earth, but Heaven will not condemn me

as a regicide. God knows, I only felt the insult of one man to another, and my fury told me that no judge should decide between man and man, but the sword.

*Hen.* And now?

*Otto.* Otto is fallen, like a broken lance. But no.—My manly courage never shall forsake me.

*Hen.* Manly courage brooks not injustice.

*Otto.* The Princes have passed sentence upon me according to the law, which considers the deed, the consequences, and the example. I have laboured to establish the dignity of that power, which now condemns me. Oh brother, wretched as I am, I still can feel some consolation, when I reflect to what a pitch our country may be raised by this spirit of justice, which refuses to be dazzled by the splendour of high birth. My disposition is well known. My motive for this deed is also known. Many will pity, none condemn me. I know that the Princes would rather have forgiven me, but it was not in their power. The safety of the German states demanded vengeance on me. Oh! 'Twas an unhallowed moment, when the sensation of man's natural freedom overpowered the duties of the friend, the citizen, and subject.—Judges, judges, your sentence is most just.

*Hen.* Is Otto's nature altered? Is Otto's spirit quite subdued? Who made these men your judges? Have we ever said to any one of them: "Be thou our master?" Are we to bear the yoke which our fathers—

*Otto.* Hold, brother. We enjoy the rights and privileges which this general union of the German states bestows on every individual of the empire.

*Hen.* You enjoy them no longer.—The states have robbed you of these rights and privileges.

*Otto.* No, Henry, I have robbed myself of them.

*Hen.* Brother, if you can satisfy yourself with such ideas

it is well—but I cannot. What have I, and what has Egbert done, that we should be condemned?

*Otto.* You! You!

*Hen.* Condemned as accomplices in your crime.

*Otto.* Brother—you!

*Hen.* "Be the ban of the empire pronounced on Otto, Henry, and Egbert!"

*Otto.* Henry and Egbert! Damnation! I scarcely can believe it.

*Hen.* Scarcely could I, when muffled in the habit of a pilgrim, I stood among the spectators at Frankfort, and heard the herald thrice pronounce the ban upon me. The words regicide and traitor, with which Otto's name was branded, still were sounding in my ears, when like an unexpected thunderbolt, sentence was also passed on Henry and on Egbert.————*(Otto seems to breathe with difficulty, and his eyes roll horribly.)*—Oh my brother! Would you had been there!

*Otto.* I am there! You condemned! Henry and Egbert condemned!—no drop of Philip's blood was shed by you, though your's was often shed for him. What is your crime?—Loyalty and zeal————Tremble, ye Princes, for Otto, though proscribed, is Otto still.——How did Lewis act?

*Hen.* The Duke remembered that his grandfather was also yours.

*Otto.* How did he act, I say?

*Hen.* He defended you with fervour, but finding no one to support him, in your cause, he acquiesced in the sentence.

*Otto.* And on you?

*Hen.* He thought our guilt not proved, and therefore left the court.

*Otto.* Where is Egbert?

*Hen.* I know not. He is probably gone to our sister in Hungary.

*Otto.* Henry, Henry, thou hast stung me to the soul. The tribunal calls me regicide—my conscience calls me fratricide.—By all the powers of Heaven, I cannot, will not bear it. By one murder Otto fell—by a thousand shall his brothers rise. Away! seek your friends, and bring them hither, I will be their leader, and, as I hope for mercy, you shall be restored to all the rights of which you are deprived.—

*Hen.* Why not restore yourself to all these rights?

*Otto.* That must not be. Go, Henry, and return as soon as possible.

*Hen.* When the centinel upon the castle-turrets shall hear the din of arms and neigh of horses, Henry of Andechs and his friends approach. Farewel.

*Otto.* Farewel. I will prepare a feast for them. The castle of the proscribed Count shall once more ring with revelry. Away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*A Tent in an open place near Aicha, and not far from Wittelsbach.*

*The* DUCHESS, *an* ATTENDANT, WILIBALD, *and* EDGAR, *are discovered in the Tent.*

*Wil.* Have you no other house but this?

*Duch.* Yes.

*Edg.* What are you doing here, then?

*Duch.* I am waiting for your kinsman.

*Wil.* Where is he?

*Duch.* He is now, I hope, on his way from Frankfort.

*Wil.* From Frankfort!

*Duch.* Yes. Why does this surprise you?

*Wil.* I am glad he has been at Frankfort, for he will not let the other Princes injure my father.

*Att.* I believe, my lady, they are coming. The boy on the hill waves his flag.—Shall I retire with the children?

*Edg.* Why retire? I have done nothing wrong.

*Wil.* I want to see my kinsman again.

*Att.* Pshaw! Only for a joke.

*Wil.* Well, if it be a joke, I'll go with you, but I must shake hands with my kinsman.

[*Exeunt* Att. Wil. *and* Edg.

*Enter* DUKE *and* REUSS.

*Duke.* I thank you for this proof of your affection, my Ludmilla.—This is Sir Frederick of Reuss, who is sent to me by the Duke of Brunswick.

*Reu.* Duke Otto craves your friendship, noble lady.

*Duch.* I thank him. You are welcome, good Sir Frederick.

*Duke.* My love, let us proceed to Braunaw.

*Duch.* How! Why in such haste? I have prepared refreshments for you.

*Reu.* What castle is that whose lofty turrets seem to touch the clouds?

*Duke.*—*(Casting a melancholy glance towards it.)*—Wittelsbach.—My love, let us proceed to Braunaw.

*Duch.* What means this look of sorrow? Is Otto's fate decreed?

*Reu.* It is, and if you know the heart of the Count Palatine, you will lament his fate sincerely. The ban of the empire is denounced against him, and every dastard is permitted to assassinate him.

*Duch.* My dearest Lewis!

*Duke.* Oh do not speak to me. My heart is quite oppressed.

*Duch.* Thou good, thou excellent man! Is such thy fate, who but to-day bestowed thy blessing on my hopes, although they crushed thy own?—*(Deeply affected.)*—Dreadful! Dreadful!

*Reu.* Noble lady, how this tear becomes you!

*Duke.* Dear Ludmilla, do not thus indulge in unavailing sorrow.

*Duch.* How could the Princes condemn so brave, so good a man?

*Duke.* It was not the Princes, but the law of God and man, which condemned him. To pardon such a crime were to be guilty of another.

*Duch.* And has he no resource?

*Duke.* None.

*Duch.* Might not your influence—

*Duke.* My influence shall never lend protection to the guilty. Otto was ever dear to me, and is so still. I call God to witness that I would shed my blood to efface his crime, but were it in my power to pardon him, I would not thus disgrace Bavaria.

*Duch.* Protect him, and his children, all ye guardian powers. [*Exit hastily.*

*Duke.* What means this? Sir Frederick, I beseech you, go to Wittelsbach. Tell the unfortunate Count what has happened, and prevail upon him to fly without delay. Calheim and his troop must be already on their way to the castle. Greet him from me, and tell him I lament his fate.

*Reu.* Age and experience have steeled my breast, but this is more than I can bear. Once more I tell you, Duke, you have condemned a noble, valiant man. God bestowed on him a manly soul, and fiery temperament. Through these he became a hero, and—a criminal.

*Enter* DUCHESS *and the* CHILDREN.

*Duch.* Know ye these boys?

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Welcome, kinsman Lewis.

*Duke.* How came they hither?

*Wil.* The Duchess brought us from Wittelsbach.

*Duke.* They must away.

*Duch.* Do you know the way to Wittelsbach.

*Both.* Oh yes.

*Duch.* Return, then, to your father.

*Edg.* Alone?

*Wil.* For shame, brother. Why not alone?

*Duch.* Right, Wilibald. Alas! You are doomed to walk, on a far more dangerous path without a guide.

*Edg.* But if we should lose our way—

*Duch.* Wretched outcasts! You cannot lose your way. You have no home—no hope—no father.

*Wil.* No father? Have the Princes at Frankfort taken him from us?—*(All are much affected.)*

*Edg.* Oh kinsman! You are our Duke. Force the Princes to let us have our father again.

*Reu.* Do not be alarmed, dear children. You have still a father.

*Duke.* Yes—that you have, by all the saints of Heaven. Let this kiss confirm it!—*(Kisses them.)*

*Wil.* Come, brother.—*(Takes* Edgar's *hand.)*—Let us run home to our father.

*Duke.* Hold!—Sir Frederick, take them with you. I give you no instructions, for you know my sentiments. I expect you at Braunaw in the evening.

*Reu.* I will be there! Till then farewel. Come, children.

*Duch.* Sir Frederick, bring them to Braunaw with you.

*Reu.* If it be possible, I will. Farewel noble lady.

*Duch.* God be with you all!

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Farewel! Farewel!

[*Exeunt* Reu. *and Boys.*

*Duke.* Let us be gone, my love.

*Duch.* Oh!

*Duke.* Your distress doubles my own. Remember, dear Ludmilla, remember that the mildew blights the ripening fruit. Come I beseech you.

*Duch.* No resource for Otto?

*Duke.* None on earth.

*Duch.* Then be he wretched here, to be hereafter blessed.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in the Castle of Wittelsbach.*

*Enter* OTTO *and* WOLF.

*Otto.* Who are these men, and how many are there?

*Wolf.* Eighty, my lord. They are Bavarians, and there is not one among them, who has not fought with you. On hearing what had happened, they forsook their homes, and are come to offer you their arms and hearts. They are resolved to wash away the ban with blood. Thus said Conrad in the name of all.

*Otto.* Conrad! Is he among them?—Open my cellar, Wolf, and give them every thing my castle can afford.—What noise is that?

*Wolf.* Your Brother comes.

*Enter* HENRY.

*Otto.* So soon returned! Art thou a dove or raven?

*Hen.* A raven! All is lost. Misfortunes crowd upon us.

Troops are already on their march against the proscribed Count of Wittelsbach.—They are led by Charles of Calheim.

*Otto.* Let them come. They shall feel that Otto still can wield a sword. Have you observed my friends assembled in the court? Go, Wolf, and see they are provided with every thing they want. [*Exit* Wolf.

*Hen.* Prepare for your defence. Calheim is not far distant with his troops.

*Otto.* 'Tis well. The savory smoke of my chimney shall lure them so near that we may slay them with our lances from the walls.

*Hen.* Your force is small, brother. It consists of only eighty—

*Otto. Men!* Conrad of Aicha is among them, and if his companions bear any resemblance to him, we shall not long be cooped within this cage. Then with my naked sword will I open the jaws of your judges, and compel them to swallow the sentence they have passed on you and Egbert.

*Enter* CONRAD, *and some of his comrades.*

*Con.* Into the field, Count Palatine! Lead us into the field. From the turret we discern some troops approaching.

*Otto.* Are you all Bavarians?

*Con.* To a man. There is not one among us, whom I should be ashamed to call my brother. "To battle" is the general cry of all.

*Otto.* Be not so hasty. We must know them, ere we march against them.

*Enter* WILIBALD *and* EDGAR.

*Wil.* Father, are you there?

*Edg.* They have not taken you away.

*Otto.* Thanks be to heaven, I see my boys again. Ha! Who comes now? Sir Frederick of Reuss!

*Enter* REUSS.

Conrad, retire awhile with thy companions.

[*Exeunt* Con. *and* Com.

Welcome a thousand times!

*Reu.* Duke Lewis greets you thus.—*(Gives him his hand.)*

*Hen.* Greets he thus the man, against whom he has denounced the empire's ban?—He slays his friend—then sends him balsam.

*Reu.* Think you that I would accept employment so absurd? Lewis's heart is noble.

*Otto.* It is. He would not condemn my brothers.

*Hen.* But he condemned you.

*Reu.* Count Henry, I can witness that he did it with reluctance the most painful. Honour and a kinsman's love contended in his bosom. He defended the Count Palatine with ardour.

*Otto.* Defended me! But why did he say nothing in favour of my brothers?——For them alone is my nature roused. The voice of conscience and of every duty is silenced in my bosom. Sooner will I heap murder upon murder—sooner will I bear the name of monster and assassin through the world than any one shall dare to lay a hand on Henry or on Egbert.—Damnation! Is it their wish to crush at one blow all the race of noble Berthold? By my soul I swear that shall not be.

*Hen.—(Embraces him.)*—My Brother!

*Reu.* Allow me to say a word upon this subject.—Count Palatine! When did you know a crime committed in a moment of passion effaced again by passion?—Why did neither

of your brothers come to prove your innocence? They would not have been refused safe conduct to the court.

*Hen.* None of our race has ever stood before a tribunal.

*Reu.* None ever was before accused. Count of Andechs, you must yourself confess that appearances were much against you. You arrived at Bamberg on the very day that your unfortunate brother perpetrated the act, and you fled with him. I am the only one who can attest your innocence, and I am prepared to do it in presence of the assembled Princes. Count of Andechs, I here give you my hand, and promise on the word and honour of a knight that if I live, you and your brother Egbert shall be released from the imperial ban.

*Otto.* Sir Frederick!

*Reu.* Count Palatine, you have witnessed what Frederick of Reuss has promised to the Count of Andechs.

*Otto.* You think there was no malice, no deception?

*Reu.* I assert and will maintain that there was none. Unwillingly the Princes passed the sentence, and in the eye of Lewis stood a tear. Even the late Emperor's faithful servants wept, and pitied you, for they had heard their master's dying words.

*Otto.* He cursed me, no doubt.

*Reu.* No. He cursed the day on which he injured you. He lamented your hot temper, which had thus destroyed you both. "Woe be to him," cried he, "who caused the difference between us!" He pardoned you sincerely, called you his noble friend, invoked a blessing on you, and expired.

*Otto.—(In most violent agitation.)*—Wretch that I am! —The murderer of my friend!———Oh Philip, Philip, Philip!

*Hen.* Dear Brother, whence this sudden agitation?

*Otto.* Ah, now do I feel the real ban. The enraged Almighty Ruler has denounced his ban against my soul. A thousand demons are at once awoke within me.—My friend murdered by myself—my Philip—my Emperor, whose heart had never harboured any bad intention against me! Oh day of horror! I am no longer Otto.

*Reu.* Fool that I was to lend you the suit of armour, and suffer you to leave my castle unaccompanied. But what avail my complaints? Let us now think of means.—

*Otto.* Raise the murdered Philip from his grave, or think no more for me. I will think of nothing but the noble Philip. Sir Frederick to you I recommend my brothers. Upon your honour I rely for their acquittal. And now, oh God, assist me, while I touch upon the most painful part of my distresses.—Frederick, my children!

*Reu.* Lewis has sworn by all the Saints of Heaven that he will be their father.—

*Otto.*—*(After some reflection.)*—No. They will but remind him of their father. In the empire they cannot now remain. I will send them to a friend, who dwells in the woods of Arden.

*Hen.* I hear the shout of war.

*Enter* WOLF *and* CONRAD.

*Wolf.* My lord the castle is surrounded.

*Con.* Lead us out. Let us drive this Count of Calheim home again.

*Reu.* They are already come—alas, before I have fulfilled the Duke's command.

*Otto.* Conrad, dost thou speak in the name of thy comrades?

*Con.* Yes. My words are theirs.

*Otto.* Let some of the oldest among them come hither, that they may hear my sentiments. Call them, Wolf.

[*Exit* Wolf.

*Enter* WILIBALD *and* EDGAR.

*Wil.* Father! Father! There are many men come.

*Edg.* They want to catch you, father.—(Otto *looks at his sons for some time—then turns away in great affliction.)*

*Enter* WOLF *and* BAVARIANS.

*Otto.* Why are you come hither, thus in arms, my countrymen?

*Con.* The empire's ban is denounced against you. We are come to protect you.

*Otto.* Know you what it is to do this? By opposing the decree of the empire, you make yourselves participators in my guilt. Surely your hair must bristle towards heaven, when I avow my crime. Hear me. I am the murderer of the Emperor. If your natures be not roused by this, hear still more. He was my friend—he injured me I grant—but he was my Emperor—my friend. Will you protect me?

*Con.* and *All.* We will.

*Otto.* If any one among you had been injured by your Duke, and were to murder him, would you protect that man?—You are silent. Right! Such conduct would be treason in its vilest shape. Regicide is parricide, for Princes are the fathers of their subjects.——Bavarians will you protect me now?—You are silent. Oh, return to your homes, I beseech you. I welcomed you at first, because I thought the conduct of the tribunal unjust towards my bro-

thers. I find, however, it was not so.—Innocence and truth will relieve them from the ban, but guilt hangs heavy upon me. No blind attachment should direct you. Justice alone should be your guide.—Go home and pray for me.

*Hen.* Brother, whither so fast?

*Otto.* Follow me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Gates and Walls of Wittelsbach*—Calheim *and his Troops have surrounded the Castle.*

*Cal.*—*(Strikes the gates with his lance.)*—Yield, yield, thou proscribed regicide. Give the signal.—*(Trumpets sound.)*—Otto of Wittelsbach, hear the command of Lewis, Duke of Bavaria. [Otto *appears upon the walls.*

*Otto.* What says my kinsman Lewis?

*Cal* He commanded me to march against the murderer of our lawful Emperor, to take him prisoner, and raze his castle to the earth.

*Otto.* Are these the words of Lewis?

*Cal.* They are my words, and the meaning of Duke Lewis.

*Otto.* Thou prating hero!

*Cal.* Thou haughty regicide! Dost thou mean to skulk within thy castle?

*Otto.* No.—*(Calls.)*—Open the gates. Conrad withdraw, and take thy comrades to their homes. I return my heartfelt thanks to thee and them for this mark of affection.—— *(The gates are opened, and* Conrad *appears with the Bavarians.)*

*Cal.* Hold! who are you, and why are you in arms?

*Con.* Bavarians—friends of Otto, Count Palatine of Wittelsbach. Make way, and let us pass.

*Cal.* Hold, I say! Why are you in arms.

*Con.* We intended to have stretched you, and your followers in the dust, but Otto has commanded us to go in peace. Make way, or we must disobey him.—*(Begins to force a passage.)*

*Cal.* Ha! Here comes the regicide.

*Enter* OTTO, *leading* WILIBALD; *and* HENRY, *leading* EDGAR; *followed by* REUSS, WOLF, *and Attendants.*

*Cal.* Seize him instantly!—*(He approaches* Otto, *followed by some of his soldiers.* Conrad *and the Bavarians turn, and guard the Count Palatine with their lances.)*

*Reu.*—*(Draws his sword.)*—Dare not to lay a hand upon him, as you regard yourselves.

*Hen.*—*(Draws his sword.)*—My brother!

*Cal.* How now! Is it thus that you obey your Duke's commands? Ye base, perfidious, perjured crew!

*Otto.* Bavarians, I thank you for my life, on account of my children. To myself it is a hateful burden. I have not raised my sword to protect myself from justice. If there be one among you, who requires my blood to pacify the shade of Philip, let him step forth. Welcome is death to me from the hand of a man, who demands it from a motive so exalted, and to his protection I will bequeath my children.—Frederick of Reuss, once more I charge you to remember my brothers and your promise. Bear my last greeting to my kinsman, Lewis, and recommend my brave defenders to his generous nature. Farewel, farewel, my brother!—children, bid farewel to your countrymen and Wittelsbach.—*(Takes the eldest in his arms*—Henry *the other.)*

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Farewel, countrymen! Farewel, Wittelsbach!—*(The Bavarians return thanks by dropping their lances.)*

*Otto.* Thank them for your father.

*Wil.* and *Edg.* We thank you for our father.

*Otto.* And now let us begone.—Come, my children! Another glance at my native castle—brother—friends—countrymen————and now away!—*(Takes his children, and goes, followed by* Henry, Reuss, Wolf, *&c.*—Calheim *and his troops enter the castle.)*

END OF ACT IV.

# *ACT V.*

SCENE.—*The Ruins of Wittelsbach Castle. The Country is covered with heaps of stone and rubbish. It is Midnight.*

*Enter* CONRAD, *and another Inhabitant of Aicha,—each with a lance and mattock.*

*Inh.* Conrad, the stars have compassion on our shins, for if it were not so light, I should never find my way, well as I know every part of this country.

*Con.* Neighbour, is that Wittelsbach?

*Inh.* It was, neighbour.

*Con.* Alas! why is the abode of generosity and virtue abandoned to the night-crows? This was once the refuge of every one in distress! How many thousands, who entered Wittelsbach with heavy hearts, have returned blithe and contented. He, whose language was not understood within a hundred miles, found Otto ready to receive him.—Oh, should some stranger wander hither, who, when at home, has heard of Otto's hospitality, what will he feel, when he beholds these ruins?—"Why was the castle of the noble Count demolished?" he will ask; then, leaning on his spear, he will listen to the mournful tale, and with a sigh pursue his way.

*Inh.* Neighbour, it is midnight, let us not return as poor as we came.

*Con.* This spectacle subdues every wish for gold.

*Inh.* Shall I begin to search among the rubbish?

*Con.* Ay, for what I care.—(Inh. *goes to the back ground, and begins his search.*)—His pains will be fruitless; for the

Counts of Wittelsbach were never wont to hoard their wealth.

*Inh.* Conrad!

*Con* Have you found any thing!

*Inh.* Not yet. How silent and dreary it is all around!

*Con.* Amuse yourself by whistling or by singing, neighbour.

*Inh.* Hark!

*Con.* What now?

*Inh.* I heard a noise.

*Con.* A goblin in the neighbourhood, perhaps. When it comes so near as to be seen, call me.—Have you discovered nothing yet?

*Inh.* No. We have bad luck, Conrad.

*Con.* I am not surprised at that.

*Inh.* Not surprised! Why, were not Otto's ancestors always accounted rich? Did they not give away their wealth by handfuls?

*Con.* That is the very reason why you find none.

*Inh.* Pshaw! They could not give it all away.

*Con.* Neighbour, let me advise you to give over your search. It is folly to seek gold in the abode of virtue.

*Inh.* Why, I came by your advice.

*Con.* True, and I own folly in having given you such advice. Neighbour, your wants distress me, but time spent here is only lost. I should be thoroughly ashamed were any one to find us here, good as our intentions are. Every Bavarian ought to weep, when he beholds these ruins, for here dwelt the noblest of Bavaria's princes. I could talk to every stone which I behold, and weep.

*Inh.* I have so many sorrows of my own.—Hark! I heard something again.—

*Con.* Pshaw!

*Inh.* I can distinguish footsteps.

*Con.* Footsteps!—I would not be detected with this vile mattock. Let us conceal ourselves, and observe who passes.—*(Hide themselves in the ruins.)*

*Enter* OTTO, WOLF, WILIBALD, *and* EDGAR.

*Otto.* Once more the swallow flitters around its nest, and chirps with gratitude, then—then, farewel for ever!—*(Stops and surveys the ruins.)*—Oh Wittelsbach! Wittelsbach!

*Wolf.* My lord, why are you come hither? This doleful spectacle will but increase your misery. Follow my advice, my Lord, and quit this dreary spot.

*Wil.* Father, who has destroyed our castle?

*Edg.* We have no home now.

*Otto.* Peace, peace, my children. The grave digger will ere long procure us an asylum. While we can bear the load of life, we will share the habitation of the stag. There we can patiently await the hour, at which the Almighty shall summon us away. Pray to him, children. Beseech him to bestow on you two feet instead of these two hands, that you may fly far from the haunts of men, and herd with the beasts of the forest. Poor luckless beings! The most wretched of mankind has still a name; but you, alas, have none! Oh! could I weep, I would baptize you with my tears, and call you Outcasts of Wittelsbach. See! Wittelsbach is no more. Fallen are her lofty turrets, and the residence of princely warriors is become a nest for poisonous adders.—And I—I am the accursed cause of all—I—the murderer of my Emperor—my friend.

*Wolf.* My lord! my dearest lord!

*Wil.* Don't say those bad words again father.

*Otto.* Ye spirits of my ancestors, if ye did ever leave the regions of eternal bliss when I have been projecting some

exploit at the dead of night, (and oft I thought I felt your influence) doubtless ye hover now above the ruins of your dwelling. Oh deign to manifest——

*Wolf.* Silence, for Heaven's sake. Disturb not the repose of the dead.

*Otto.* Hark! Hark! They denounce their curses on the degenerate Otto.

*Con.*—*(From the ruins.)*—Hail to the noble Otto.

*Otto.*—*(Starts.)*—What was that?

*Wolf.* Methought I heard a voice say—"Hail to the noble Otto!"

*Otto.* Some deception lurks here.—I must dive into it.—Give me my lance.

*Wolf.* Oh stay, my lord.

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Stay, stay, father.

*Otto.* My lance this instant!—*(Takes it, and goes among the ruins.)*—Whoever thou mayst be, repeat thy words.

*Con.*—*(From his place of concealment.)*—Hail to the noble Otto!

*Otto.* Who art thou? answer me.

CONRAD *and his Companion appear.*

*Con.* Conrad of Aicha, your old servant! Once more hail to the noble Otto?

*Inh.* Hail to the noble Otto!

*Otto.* What are you doing here?

*Con.* We are come upon a very foolish errand, Count Palatine.

*Otto.* Folly will produce nothing but repentance. What is your errand?

*Con.* My lord, I will confess what it is, though it is to my disgrace. My neighbour, here, has a father ninety years of age, who is sick, and stretched upon a bed of straw.—

He came to me, and begged my assistance. Money I had none, for I had spent my all in the late wars. What was to be done? Suddenly it occurred to me that my neighbour might, perhaps, find something of value buried in these ruins.

*Otto.* Have you succeeded?

*Con.* We were fools to fancy that we ever should.

*Otto.* Why so? Do you think there is nothing of value buried here? Do you remember, Conrad, that my grandfather, Otto, supported from his private coffers a whole army for Bavaria's defence? Do you remember that my father, Berthold, during the famine, eat at his own table crusts of bread steeped in water, that he might support thousands of his countrymen? Thinkest thou, they did not thereby hoard a treasure?

*Con.* What treasure?

*Otto.* The blessing of Bavaria upon Wittelsbach.

*Con.* and *Inh.* True! True!

*Otto.* But I have shaken off this blessing, and loaded myself with a curse. I was a good branch of the old tree, but I bore destructive fruit, and it was right to lop me off.—May the tree remain! May posterity repose beneath the shade of it, and may no one ask—"Why was a branch of such a noble stem lopped off?"—Lewis, thou hast condemned me. Lewis, thou hast my blessing.

*Con.* Say but one word, and you shall be restored to all your former dignity.

*Otto.* What word?

*Con.* War.

*Wil.* and *Edg.* War.

*Otto.*—*(To the children.)*—Ye thoughtless brats! Why do you echo such a word? Have I not shed the blood of him who ruled the empire? Shall I too spread ruin and destruction through the empire? Cursed be he, who seeks

his own revenge in civil wars. Oh, could I think that either of my children would hereafter cherish a thought destructive to the holy empire,—at this moment would I dash his head against the ruins of my castle.

*Wolf.* My lord, I pray you let us hence. The morning dawns.

*Otto.* Alas! Hitherto I journeyed by the light of day through town and country, but now—peace, peace!—I will straight to the Holy Land.—As for thee, take thy old father to the hospital at Munich lately founded by the duke.

*Inh.* No, my good lord—

*Otto.* Why not?

*Inh.* I would rather steal for his support. Would it not be an everlasting shame upon me, if I were to let the Prince maintain him when it is my duty?

*Otto.* Blessings on thee, good Bavarian! Wolf, hast thou any money left?

*Wolf.* Not more than you will absolutely want, my lord.

*Otto.* True.—I do want it.—Give it hither.—There!—Share that with Conrad.—(*Gives it to the inhabitant of Aicha.*)

*Con.* No, no, Count Palatine!

*Otto.* Conrad, I have not given thee this without a motive. Take these two boys, and be their protector for a few days, when I shall send a man from the woods of Arden for them.

*Wil.* I'll stay with you, father.

*Edg.* So will I, father.

*Otto.* Have you a father? No. I deprived you of him, by trying to bestow on you a mother. Go, children. Go with this man. You know him?

*Wil.* and *Edg.* Yes, we know Conrad, but—

*Otto.* No more! Go with him. Conrad take them away.

*Edg.* Why do you send us away?

*Wil.* Have we done any thing wrong?

*Otto.* Horror! Horror! Oh spare me, Conrad.——— But yet—another kiss—a father's kiss.—Oh God! How difficult it is to part with those we love—*for ever!*—Farewel, my first-born—Wilibald!—Farewel, my Edgar!—The guardian saints of Heaven protect you!——Conrad, it was lucky that I found thee here.—Go—go—and greet my neighbours, the citizens of Aicha.

*Con.* Blessings on you, noble Count! Had you not entrusted such a treasure to me, I would have wandered with you to the world's end.

*Wil.* Father, we shall soon meet again.

*Edg.* Very soon, I hope.

*Otto.* My heart-strings will crack. Away! Away!—(*Exeunt* Con. *and* Boys.)—Yes, we shall meet again—and soon perhaps, for soon my hapless infants will no longer have a natural protector.—(*Seats himself on a stone.*)—I have often secretly valued myself upon that stedfast manly spirit which never would allow misfortune to depress it, but now—(*Covers his face.*)

*Wolf.*—(*Surveys him for a moment.*)—His eye disdains to weep, although his heart is bleeding.—This was Wittelsbach—and this was Otto.

*Otto.* ——Let us quit this spot.

*Wolf.* Ay, come my lord.

*Otto.* Wolf!

*Wolf.* What now, my—

*Otto.* How old art thou?

*Wolf.* Sixty-five years.

*Otto.* Go, then, to Braunaw. Tell the Duke thou wert his kinsman's armour-bearer. Lewis will support thee.

*Wolf.* Could you then discard me? May my soul want mercy, if I ever leave you! I can dress your wounds at east.

*Otto.* Come hither, then. Apply thy balsam to my heart, for that is sorely wounded.

*Wolf.* Alas! I cannot heal it.

*Otto.* Come, then. I will to the left, and wash my hands at sun-rise in the Danube.

*Wolf.* Have you not heard that Calheim still is in this neighbourhood?

*Otto.* Thou shalt be my surgeon, and my grave-digger—but not my guide.— —Hold! wouldst thou be more ungrateful than the stork?—Wouldst thou go without a farewel look towards Wittelsbach?

*Wolf.* Oh!

*Otto.* Habitation, name, and native land, farewel!—Bavaria!—My children!—Wittelsbach!—Philip!—Oh agony!— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*A Wood near Oberndorf.—The dawn of morning breaks through the heavy clouds.*

*Enter* HENRY *and* EGBERT, *disguised as Pilgrims.*

*Egb.* Have I then journeyed thus far once more to embrace my brother Otto, and shall I not find him?

*Hen.* Find him we will, if even half consumed by worms. But no doubt he is wandering near Wittelsbach, till he has found some situation for his children.

*Egb.* Our sister in Hungary will be a good mother to them.

*Hen.* Let us then away to Wittelsbach. Lewis, I hear, is gone from Braunaw to Neuburg.

*Egb.* For what reason?

*Hen.* He expects to meet Otto of Brunswick there, whom he means to accompany to Aix. Otto will doubtless now

be chosen Emperor. This is a happy circumstance for us, if the ambassador, Sir Frederick of Reuss, keep his promise.

*Egb.* But our poor brother—

*Hen.* When we are again restored to our dignities, we shall have power enough to gain his pardon. Come! let us seek him.

*Egb.* I hear a noise.

*Hen* True. Let us conceal ourselves. I can distinguish some one in armour. [*They retire.*

*Enter* CALHEIM, *with his troops.*

*Cal.* The intelligence may be relied upon. He will pass through this wood. This is the only bridge over the stream, and here I take my station. My duty commands me to be indefatigable in the pursuit, for it would be an eternal disgrace to Germany, were he to escape with life. Come! I will appoint to each his post at a distance from the public road. Such men as he avoid the paths which others tread. Come! [*Exit with his troops.*

HENRY *and* EGBERT *appear.*

*Hen.* There did I skulk unarmed, while fury boiled within my breast. Calheim! Calheim! Thou murderer!

*Egb.* Oh brother, let us fly to find him.

*Hen.* Away towards Wittelsbach! I know the way.

[*Exeunt.*

*Re-enter* CALHEIM, *with some followers.*

*Cal.* We will, as I told you, guard this bridge. The spy, whom I employed, has never yet deceived me, and according to his account, Otto intends to pass through Hun-

gary to Jerusalem.—*(Aside.)*—True, my good friend, Artenberg. Were this man to remain alive, and find that thou wert the cause of the Emperor's conduct towards him, the consequences might be fatal to thee. But thou shalt not repent the confidence thou hast reposed in me.—I hate this Otto, and will not leave the death of my old patron, Philip, unrevenged. As for his brothers, they may wander where they will. Let Otto fall, and Calheim's vengeance is complete.—*(Goes towards the bridge, where his followers have stretched themselves at their ease.)*

*Enter* OTTO *and* WOLF.

*Wolf.* I heard several voices distinctly both to the right and left. Oh, my lord, beware lest you fall into any snare laid for you by this Charles of Calheim.

*Otto.* Have we not thus far pursued our way unmolested? But now—I am weary. I must repose beneath these trees awhile.

*Wolf.* You weary, my lord! Alas! You are indeed no longer Otto.—But, for Heaven's sake, do not tarry here.—I feel a chill through all my frame. Do not tarry here.

*Otto.* The place is well adapted to the sensations of my soul. The owl shrieks in yonder tree, and seems to summon restless spirits to their revels. The bat flits past us, and the vermin of the night already seems to claim us as its prey.

*Wolf.* I beseech you, let us proceed.

*Cal.* Holla!—Who goes there?

[*His followers spring up.*

*Wolf.* Away! Away!

*Otto.* Holla, friend! Come nearer. Who appointed thee toll-gatherer at this bridge? I will pay nothing. Let me pass.

*Cal.* That voice, and that person, if the twilight deceive me not, betray you are—

*Wolf.* Draw, my lord.

*Otto.* A man. If thou dost doubt it, come nearer that I may rub my beard across thine eyes, and wake thee.

*Cal.*—*(To his men.)*—'Tis he.

*Wolf.* Oh, my lord! Away! Away! 'Tis Calheim, your enemy. Away!

*Otto.* Ha!—Calheim, I am Otto. Heaven reward thee for the trouble thou hast had! No battery could have razed my castle so completely. No mason's tool could have so perfectly disjointed it. Hast thou, then, changed thy trade? Art thou become a watchman—or what art thou?

*Cal.* I am the avenger of majesty and of the empire.—Yield, regicide. No lances here defend thee, as at Wittelsbach.

*Wolf.* Fly, my lord, fly.

*Otto.* Otto never fled from man. Though no Bavarian lances now defend me, still do I stand upon Bavarian soil. Firm as an oak I stand. Who will fell it?

*Cal.* I!—*(Stabs him from behind.)*

*Wolf.* Villain!—*(Attempts to draw his sword, but is disarmed.)*

*Otto.* That was a dastardly attack.—*(Falls.)*—Ye cowards!——Oh! Well aimed! Well aimed!

[*Wolf supports him.*

*Cal.* I am satisfied with this revenge. Be thou so with the punishment. A regicide deserves far more.

*Otto.* That is true,—therefore—I pardon thee.—*(Falls.)*

*Wolf.* Oh do not fall, my lord.

*Otto.* Yes, Wolf.—Life ebb, a pace.—Farewel, my trusty servant!—Farewel, my children! and Bavaria!—

[*Dies.*

*Wolf.* Oh day of horror!—*(Tears his hair in frantic*

*agony. Some of* Calheim's *followers stand near* Otto, *and survey him with a look of mingled awe and sorrow.)*

*Enter* HENRY *and* EGBERT, *conducted by some of* CALHEIM'S *men.*

*Cal.* Who are you?

*Hen.* What do I see? My brother? Oh Otto! Otto!

*Egb.* God of Heaven.—*(They fall at each side of the body.)*—

*Wolf.* Away! Rob me not of my office. I am his surgeon and his grave-digger.

*Hen.* Who committed this dreadful act?

*Cal.* I, the avenger of majesty, and the empire, the executor of the law, the punisher of treason—Charles of Calheim!

(Henry *and* Egbert *kneel at each side of their brother,* Wolf *at his head. The curtain slowly descends.)*

THE END.

OF THE
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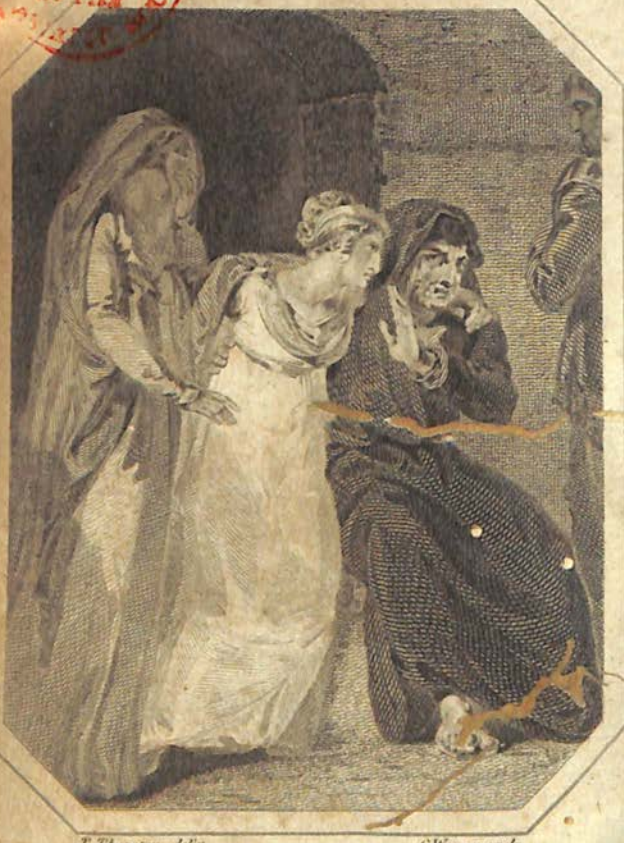

T. Thurston delin. C. Warren sculp.

# Dagobert.

Act the 4.th

# DAGOBERT,

## *KING OF THE FRANKS.*

A

## *TRAGEDY,*

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

## JAMES MARCUS BABO,

BY

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Bab/Dag

## *DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

DAGOBERT, *lawful King of the Franks.*
CHILDEBERT, *Usurper of his Throne.*
GRIMBALD, *Father of Childebert, and Prime Minister of the Kingdom.*
CLOVIS, *a Knight related to Dagobert.*
GOMAR,
BRUNO,
RAGOND,
OSMAR,
CLODOMIR, } *Knights.*
OFFICER.
HERALD.

ADELGUNDA, *Wife of Dagobert.*
ADA, *Daughter of Dagobert and Adelgunda.*

*Knights—Soldiers—Populace, &c.*

# DAGOBERT.

## *ACT I.*

SCENE.—*A Square, in which a great Multitude is assembled.* Dagobert, *in the mean Habit of a Pilgrim, is sitting upon a Step at the Entrance of a House.*

DAGOBERT *surveying the Multitude.*

*Dag.* How wonderful! Not a single eye is turned towards me.—Were I a trumpeter of some silly exhibition, instead of a poor man, thousands would look at me.——I know not one person in this crowd, and yet there are doubtless many, whom I formerly knew.—Can an interval of ten years make so great an alteration in the features?—How little, then, must I resemble King Dagobert, since distress and anguish have been my daily companions.——Alas! Must they be my companions in future too?

*Trumpets announce a* Herald's *approach. The crowd turns to the quarter from which the sound is heard.— Enter a* Herald, *accompanied by* Soldiers, *of whom one bears the royal banner.*

*Herald.* Childebert the Second, King of the Franks, announces to his people that he will this day solemnize his



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marriage with the royal widow, Adelgunda. Be the day a day of joy! Long live the royal pair!

*Some of the people.* Long live King Childebert and Queen Adelgunda!—*(The* Herald *proceeds to another street—the crowd follows.)*

*Dag.* Damned be the worthless pair!

*Gomar.—(Approaches from the retiring crowd, and surveys* Dag.)—Dost thou not rejoice at thy monarch's nuptials?

*Dag.* I am a foreigner.

*Gom.* Whence art thou come?

*Dag.* From Rome.—I have been a miserable sinner, and for the sake of gain once entered into the service of the Saxon heathens. With them I burnt and plundered many a cloister—many a church—till Heaven at length taught me to repent. I journeyed to Ireland, in hopes that the pious bishop Wilfried would grant me absolution, but he sent me to Rome. I promised to deliver his greeting to some knights here, and for that purpose travel through this country on my return to Ireland.

*Gom.* To Ireland, sayst thou?

*Dag.* Yes.

*Gom.* To whom dost thou bring greeting, from the pious bishop Wilfried?

*Dag.* To Clovis and one Gomar.

*Gom.* Dost thou know them?

*Dag.* I know the former. He gave me a friendly welcome last night when I arrived. The other has only resided here five years—him I do not know.

*Gom.* I am he.

*Dag.* You!

*Gom.* Yes. I am Gomar.

*Dag.* That is possible. If it be true, expect me here.—I shall soon return.

*Gom.* Hold! Answer me a question. If thou dost answer it according to my wish, my house and home shall be thine, and thou shalt want no comfort in thy declining years.—*(Looks suspiciously round.)*—Didst thou never hear that some time ago a monarch sat upon this throne, called Dagobert?

*Dag.* Undoubtedly, but—peace be to his soul—it must now be ten years since he died.

*Gom.* Didst thou hear nothing more of him in Ireland?

*Dag.* As I tell you, I heard that Dagobert was his name, and—

*Gom.* Not that he was alive?

*Dag.* How! Alive!

*Gom.* It is said that he lives with the pious Wilfried.

*Dag.* Indeed!—*(Aside.)*—Were this Gomar—but I dare not———

*Gom.* What mutterest thou respecting Gomar?

*Dag.* I wish much to see him, that I may be enabled to proceed on my journey.

*Gom.* By heavens thou art the first who ever dared to doubt my name.

*Dag.* Pardon me, noble knight. I was not formerly suspicious, but many circumstances which I have witnessed during my pilgrimage have made me so. It is said, too that many villanous transactions have taken place at this court. Be not incensed at the freedom of my speech. If we knew each other, I might address you in a very different manner.

*Gom.* Thou art a strange man.

*Dag.* Strange indeed in this ragged mantle.

*Gom.* Come with me to my house. I will give thee hearty welcome.

*Dag.* I thank you, knight, but my way lies through that street. Farewel.

*Gom.* Stay. There comes Clovis. Thou wilt now hear who I am. [Dag. *retires.*

*Enter* CLOVIS.

*Clo.* Oh Gomar, have I at last found you? Instantly accompany me. I will with a single word breathe fire into your every vein.—*(Whispers in his ear.)*

*Gom.* God of Heaven! Arrived!——Peace, friend.—We are not alone.—*(Points to* Dag.)

*Dag.* Clovis, knowst thou thy guest?

*Clo.* Heavens! 'Tis he himself—my monarch.—How dare you—at such a time—in such a place—

*Dag.* Be at ease. Who will think of seeking the deceased Dagobert in this mean habit? Even the perfidy of my people, who could so soon forget me, is a security against all dangers. Who will interest himself about a beggar?——Even now, a herald was here, proclaiming the adulterous union. Oh Clovis, his words appalled my soul like the curse of the Almighty.

*Gom.—(Who has been lost in astonishment, throws himself at* Dagobert's *feet.)*—Blest be the hour at which I am again allowed to see my king. Behold a faithful subject at your feet. In this bosom beats the heart of an honest Frank. Think not you are forgotten. Time and deception have clouded the recollection of you in the minds of your people; but in every heart is lodged the thought that Dagobert is the last branch of the royal family. This thought will excite every one to noble deeds.—Let us rouse the latent spark.

*Dag.* That will we, by the Almighty. Rise, Frank, and come into the arms of a Frank.—*(Embraces him.)*—And now, friends, what think you of Adelgunda?—The faithless wretch!

*Clo.* Tyranny, and the artifice of Grimbald have compelled her to take this step. Often have I heard her bewail your death with floods of tears. Oh, if she knew you were alive—

*Dag.* To you my friends, as well as to her, my fate was unknown. You were ignorant how I fell into the traitor's snare, how my subjects were deceived as to my death, and how vilely I was treated. You knew not that I was dragged by hired slaves into the remote desarts of Ireland, where I was doomed to undergo misery and want. No. You thought me dead, yet still remained faithful to your sovereign and justice. But she——To-day we shall see whether virtue, or a shameful attachment to Childebert and regal pomp will guide her actions. Friends, I fear my wife is lost,—for a faithful wife would sooner throw herself into the arms of death than the arms of an usurper,—To-day I must see her—to-day I must be convinced.

*Clo.* Yet hazard not too much.

*Dag.* He, who has lost every thing but life, can hazard nothing—for death is a blessing to him.

*Gom.* But he who has friends, has not lost every thing.

*Dag.—(Buried in reflection.)*—Are a king's friends real friends?

*Clo.* How!

*Gom.—(Displeased.)*—I love the man who deserves it, whether he be king or slave.

*Dag.—(Still in deep meditation.)*—Yes—see her I must,—her and my Ada——this very day. Oh, if it be true, the tortures of the damned are ecstasy compared to mine.

*Clo.* My liege!

*Dag.* Do you know me?

*Gom.* You are our king. We acknowledge no other.

*Dag.* Do not fancy that my senses are bewildered. No, my friends. I meant to ask whether you knew me in this

habit.—Clovis, when I last night came to your house, you did not know me—nor did you, Gomar, recognize me to-day. You thought me a poor foreign pilgrim.—Tis well.—No one will discover who I am. Go home, or elsewhere, as your concerns may direct—but lay not your swords aside, nor sleep, for you might be suddenly awoke. In an hour go to the palace.——See, see! Some one comes hastily this way.

*Gom.* It is Clodomir.—Conceal yourself.

*Clo.* He has not perceived me. Withdraw with me.

*Dag.* I shall remain here.

*Gom.* Then are you lost. He is Grimbald's slave.

*Dag.* He cannot know me.

*Clo.* But he knows us to be disaffected men, as he terms it, and enemies to his master. The villain will become suspicious. Go, if you please. I will remain.—*(Both appear anxious and distressed.)*

*Enter* CLODOMIR.

*Clod.* Well, knights, why thus solitary?—Come to the nuptial banquet at the palace.——*(To* Dag.)—Who art thou?

*Dag.* A poor man, whom Heaven has allowed to penetrate into the secret mysteries of futurity.

*Clod.* A soothsayer,—a sort of prophet, I suppose?

*Dag.* True—but not one of those, who are usually met with. My art has been acknowledged and admired in many countries.

*Clod.* Then you have been telling these knights a few truths, I suppose—and very unpleasant truths they must be, if I may judge by their looks.—You, Mr. Soothsayer, come with me to the palace. I'll make your fortune—but you must banish all serious matter, and prophesy nothing

but happiness. Come.——(*To* Clo. *and* Gom.)—Will you go with us?

*Clo.* Clodomir, I shall not part with this stranger. I received him into my house, and hospitality demands that he should remain there.

*Clod.* Is he not safe in the palace?

*Clo.* He will be ridiculed.

*Clod.*—(*To* Dag.)—May we not joke with thee?

*Dag.* I am seriously inclined, but will accompany you. I may, perhaps, to-day afford some amusement to the courtiers.

*Clod.* There thou art right. Let the stars say what they will—but be merry, be merry—for no one wishes to be told that he will be sick to-morrow, or murdered the next day. If I were in thy place, I would prophesy that every one should have what he liked. Dost thou understand me? But no. This requires penetration—and that is more than a black beard and tattered cloak. It requires a keen look like mine into the human heart.—But I am wasting time—though I am very fond of talking on subjects where skill and address are necessary. I feel at home on these subjects, as every one in the palace will tell you. Go thither with me.—Clovis, I will be answerable for his safety.

*Clo.* That will I myself.—Come with me.—(*Takes* Dagobert's *hand, and attempts to lead him away.*)

*Clod.* Clovis you are too forward.

*Clo.* Clovis can never be too forward, when addressing Clodomir.

*Dag.* Contend not, knights, respecting me. Noble Clovis, I thank you for your hospitality.—(*To* Clod.)—Come, lead me to the palace.

*Clod.* For ten years, Clovis, I have warned you to speak more temperately—yet you cannot. (*Exit with* Dag. (Clo. *attempts to follow, but is detained by* Gom.)

*Gom.* Did you observe with what eagerness he availed himself of an apology for being admitted into the palace? His eye seemed to prognosticate some mighty deed. It beamed with lustre indescribable.

*Clo.* Gomar, he shall mount the throne of his ancestors, if my body be the first step to it. Heaven knows that my intentions are pure, and that royal favour is not my object. But shall Franks be any longer ruled with a rod of iron? Oh, Gomar, posterity will not believe that a man of spirit existed among us.—

*Gom.* Come, Clovis. Let us announce to our friends the banished king's return.

*Clo.* Right—then observe his every step in the palace—defend him—and die for him.

*Gom.* Or protect him, and live for Ada.

*Clo.* Gomar, what mean you?

*Gom.* Do you no longer love her?

*Clo.* Friend, the question is a dagger to my heart.— — Oh Ada, Ada, thou art lost to me.

*Gom.* Lost! when you appear to have reached the goal of your wishes?

*Clo.* Lost, lost for ever.

*Gom.* Can Dagobert refuse to grant his friend and protector—

*Clo.* End not the question. Would not the world say that Clovis was interested in the restoration of Dagobert? No. Never shall private advantage influence me. What I do for Dagobert, my conscience and my honour command me to do for my king.—No one can bestow upon me the hand of Ada, but Ada herself. Clovis cannot be a hireling, and accept a recompence for his actions.—But enough. Let us begone.—Our monarch's situation demands our instant attendance. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

## *ACT II.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

*Enter* GRIMBALD *and* CHILDEBERT.

*Gri.* My son, I have, during ten years, looked forward to this day with fearful anxiety. Restless have been my nights—joyless my days.—Even the splendour of your crown did not gratify my sight, because it was not firmly fixed upon your brow. Every discontented look filled my mind with alarm. I trembled when I thought of Dagobert, for well I know he has friends in the kingdom. Cursed be Clodomir, for having persuaded me to spare his life.—But the hours of alarm are past. To-day joy returns to my bosom, for your union with Adelgunda secures to our race the succession to the throne.——My son, your gloomy look disappoints my expectation.

*Chi.* Oh, my father! joy comes not always when wished for. How if our good fortune were eventually to prove the reverse.

*Gri.* Think not thus—(*Mildly*)—my king!

*Chi.* Of what avail is it that I am a king, while an imperious tyrant governs me.

*Gri.*—(*In a threatening tone.*)—Son!

*Chi.* I was speaking of my heart.

*Gri.* Oh that I had not implanted royal notions in your mind! You disgrace a diadem. I am the prop of your greatness, and my counsel supports you on the throne to

which my exertions raised you. Without me you would be —but no more of this.—Go, visit Adelgunda, and beg her to fix an hour for the solemnization of your nuptials.

*Chi.* Allow me a few moments—let me reflect—

*Gri.* Reflect! This conduct is absurd.

*Chi.* Absurd, indeed, to be dazzled by the splendour of a crown, and barter my peace of mind for regal pomp.—Be not angry, my father. Allow me for a moment to be really a king and to speak frankly. You told me that I should find happiness on the throne, whereas care has been my constant companion. I am the slave of a whole nation, and my smallest error is censured with severity by thousands. The world requires much of him, who steps forward from millions, and ventures on the government of millions.

*Gri.* Be you the king, and let the government rest with me.

*Chi.* And shall I for that title sacrifice my peace of mind —nay even be deprived of what most dignifies a king—the power of doing good?

*Gri.* Who deprives you of this?

*Chi.* In fact the power itself; for the oppressed sufferer is so far removed from the throne, that his complaints cannot reach the monarch's ear.

*Gri.* The meanest slave could not harbour notions more degraded. I have raised you so high that your shallow brain rocks. Fool that I was!

*Enter* CLODOMIR.

*Clod.* A trifling circumstance may be productive of essential benefit.

*Gri.* Why this remark?

*Clod.* You shall hear. It is evident how difficult it is to persuade the queen that her union with King Childebert

is proper. You know how she weeps, and talks of her dear Dagobert.

*Chi.* Is this all you have to say?

*Clod.* By no means, for what I have said is merely a prelude to what you shall now hear. I have remarked that all women have one weakness, and that is a sort of nervous susceptibility. An occurrence, to which a man would pay no attention, has often great effect upon a female mind.—I see you are impatient. I now come to the point. About an hour ago, as I was coming towards the palace, I met with a soothsayer, whom I have brought with me—a learned man, I assure you. He told me every circumstance that had happened to me since I lived at court.—How if you were to introduce this man to the queen, and make him the vehicle of your wishes?

*Gri.* Right, Clodomir.—He must say that this union is the decree of Heaven.

*Clod.* Such was my idea.

*Gri.* That the welfare of the kingdom, as well as her own, demands it.

*Clod.* Certainly.

*Chi.* What a paltry artifice!

*Gri.* Thanks, Clodomir! Adelgunda's sorrow, whether real or assumed, will be thereby moderated. You must give the man proper instructions.

*Clod.* To make the matter more probable, some other person must consult this man in the presence of the queen. For instance, you, Grimbald. Consult him respecting yourself—

*Gri.* I—no—no—I don't wish that.—King Childebert, will you not go to Adelgunda?

*Chi.* Of course I must.— [*Exit.*

*Gri.* Hear me, Clodomir. I am by no means satisfied with my son's conduct. His mind is not superior to com-

mon prejudices. His heart is soft as wax.—A deed, which he condemns as infamous, appears to him, when exhibited in another light, worthy of imitation. Paint the phantom, which he calls Virtue, in gloomy colours, and he will fly from it as if it were Vice. His affection for me has restrained him from many a silly action.

*Clod.* Very good qualities for a king, who is under your direction.

*Gri.* Clodomir, ask this soothsayer—but you must not suppose I pay any regard to such things, for that would be ridiculous—yet—perhaps——ask him if Dagobert be dead.—I must own this idea now and then——Clodomir, you were the cause of my sparing his life.

*Clod.* I own it, and am sorry for it. I was then weak, and a foolish sensation of pity had a place in my bosom.—But be at ease. Distance, and your firmly-seated power make it of little consequence whether he be dead or not.—What were you about to say of your son?

*Gri.* I fear that when Adelgunda becomes acquainted with his weaknesses—

*Clod.* At all events, then, my advice, if at one time bad, was at another good.—Did I not advise you to place the crown on your own head?

*Gri.* True. I ought to have done so.

*Clod.* And is it now too late?

*Gri.* Had I a younger son, he should be a godlike king. I would instil into his mind my firm and lofty sentiments.

*Clod.* And Childebert?

*Gri.* Childebert!—How can Clodomir ask such a question? Clodomir should be the first to answer it, were the case at hand.

*Clod.* I only wished to see whether you had arrived so far in state-policy that even your own son—

*Gri.* Peace!—Go and instruct the soothsayer.

*Clod.* Another word. You know my attachment to you, Grimbald.—I have just had a dispute with Clovis respecting this soothsayer, in the course of which he called me the cowardly slave of an infamous usurper.

*Gri.* Ha! That was aimed at me, and I will aim a deadly blow at him in return.—Cursed be the love of the people—cursed be his hypocritical and calm demeanour, which counteracts all my attempts to destroy him. But the vengeance of Grimbald awaits him—he shall not escape it.

*Clod.* Shall I do what you desired?

*Gri.* Yes.—(*Exit* Clod.)—He shall not escape it, if even Hell itself protect him.—Not one friend or relation of Dagobert will I spare. The sight of any one of them is torture to me.—How cheerful and delighted was I, when this morning dawned—yet now my mind is again oppressed.—But why?—What do I fear?—Damnation! I'll find repose even if I purchase it with streams of blood. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*The Queen's Anti-chamber.*—*Enter* DAGOBERT *conducted by* CLODOMIR.

*Dag.* Are these the queen's apartments?

*Clod.* They are. The king is with her.

*Dag.* Ha!—Childebert with her!

*Clod.* How can that concern thee?—Now hear what it is necessary thou shouldst know. Thou hast, without doubt, been told that Childebert is about to marry Adelgunda.

*Dag.* Happy may they be! They are worthy of each other.

*Clod.* Adelgunda is, nevertheless, sad, and incessantly laments the loss of her husband. For ten years have we urged every real and specious argument in favour of this union, but in vain. Yesterday we at length prevailed upon

her to alter her resolution, though it is evident she does it more from despair than inclination. Thou shalt tell her that this alliance is decreed by heaven—that the welfare of the state requires it, and so forth.—Thou knowest the influence which the declaration of a soothsayer has upon the mind of woman. Shouldst thou succeed so far as to allay her scruples and remove her sorrow, thou wilt have cause to recollect a monarch's gratitude throughout thy life.

*Dag.* It will not be difficult to dry her tears.

*Clod.* Think'st thou her sorrow is feigned?

*Dag.* Were it real, she never would have consented to become the wife of Childebert.

*Clod.* So thought I. Where is the woman, who after a lapse of ten years, needs consolation for the loss of her husband?

*Dag.* True.

*Clod.* And such a handsome monarch as Childebert, might console many a one before the death of her husband.

*Dag.* Ha! Ha!—You are wise, I perceive.

*Clod.* And she had been married to Dagobert seven years when he died.

*Dag.* Died!

*Clod.*—(*Starts.*)—How! What mean'st thou?

*Dag.*—(*Aside.*)—I shall betray myself.

*Clod.* Is he, then, not dead?

*Dag.* Assuredly he is.—Pardon me.—I am always alarmed when I hear of death. I was many years absent from my native home. I was thought to be dead. My paternal inheritance was seized by others, and on my return, several people thought me a spectre, and died through alarm.

*Clod.* Man, there is something so dreadful in thy look—

*Dag.* You mock a poor pilgrim.

*Clod.* Thou art not a common soothsayer. Canst thou predict my future destiny?

*Dag.* The book of Fate is open to me.—Of thee nothing is written but "He was the confidential adviser of Grimbald, and therefore the abettor of his deeds."

*Clod.*—*(Aside.)*—He almost alarms me.——Canst thou not interpret this?

*Dag.* No. It is the will of the Almighty, that Dagobert shall do the rest. Were I to interpret the words of fate, I must write them with thy heart's blood.

*Clod.*—*(Aside.)*—This man must be disposed of.—Hear me.—The queen will soon be here. Come with me, and station thyself at the door, till I send Bruno, who will introduce thee to her. Thou hast not forgotten my instructions?

*Dag.* Forgetfulness is not one of my faults. I will do every thing in my power.

*Clod.* Come, then. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter* ADELGUNDA *and* ADA.

*Adel.* Alas, my poor girl, the misfortunes of your mother destroy the pleasures which life would otherwise afford you. But try to be more cheerful. Look calmly into futurity, for you are free from my hard lot. Fate does not unite you to a man whom you abhor. Willingly my Ada, would I have concealed my sorrows in my own bosom, but the time is arrived when I must disclose them to you.—While your noble father Dagobert was living, Grimbald already fixed his hopes upon the crown. My husband was young, and was too easily misled by Grimbald, whose counsel often caused rebellion. Old Clovis was your father's guardian angel. Often did he describe the treacherous conduct of the minister, but in vain. The villain had too firmly ingratiated himself, and when old Clovis fell in battle, he smiled with satisfaction, for he knew Grimbald had

now no opponent—Dagobert no friend. All who were honest were dismissed from court, and fawning sycophants supplied their places.—When you were about six years of age, Dagobert permitted me to take you with me on a visit to my father.—Scarcely had we passed one day with him, ere a messenger announced to me my husband's death. We instantly returned, and found Childebert on the throne. Oh, my Ada, a dreadful suspicion took root in my soul. Every night my sleep was disturbed by horrid dreams, and the pale form of Dagobert appeared to me, claiming revenge on Grimbald and Childebert.

*Ada.* Revenge?

*Adel.* Oh, Ada, you are not yet acquainted with the villany of which mankind is capable.—Young Clovis was the last male branch of Dagobert's race. His claims to the crown were indisputable, yet Childebert still wears it. Clovis is hated and persecuted, and nothing but the love of a whole nation preserves his life.—And now Ada, the usurper marries me, that I may protect him from your father's friends —from justice—from myself.

*Ada.* Will you bestow your hand for such a purpose?

*Adel.* My hand is all he requires—he shall have it, and then—but you are too young to comprehend the lofty project. Ada, thee will I behold upon the throne, and Clovis at thy side. The duty which I owe to the nation and to the blood of Dagobert, compels me to take this step.—Clovis is a man of magnanimity and honour. He is worthy of my daughter and the crown.

*Ada.* Oh, my mother! you shall not sacrifice your happiness to promote mine.

*Adel.* Shall Grimbald's house rule over Franks? Shall Dagobert's descendants obey?—Who comes there!

*Enter* BRUNO.

*Bru.* A man of most singular appearance requests an audience of your majesty.

*Adel.* What does he want?

*Bru.* I found him at the door, and as far as I could judge, he was in conversation with himself; soon as he espied me, he requested I would introduce him to your Majesty.

*Adel.* Conduct him hither.

*Ada.* I dare say it is the stranger, who came to the palace a few hours since. He is a soothsayer.

*Adel.* We will hear what he has to say.

BURNO *introduces* DAGOBERT, *who enters slowly and with his face half concealed.*

*Dag.* Heaven bless you, gracious queen—and you fair princess!

*Ada.* How dreadful is the sound of his voice! Let him not proceed, dear mother.

*Adel.* Of what are you afraid? Be at ease.—You are a soothsayer, I understand?

*Dag.* I am.—*(Aside.)*—The sight of her almost overpowers me.—*(Aloud.)*—My art has been acknowledged in many lands.

*Adel.* Do you know my future destiny?

*Dag.* Most perfectly. Let this knight withdraw—(Adel. *gives a hint to* Bru. *who retires.)*—Shall I proceed?

*Adel.* Do so.

*Dag.* 'Tis well. Then hear me.—Lovely are all the horrors of nature—lovely is the pestilence, which tears the hopeful youth from the arms of his old helpless father—lovely is death, when it overtakes the suckling on the cold

bosom of its dead mother—lovely is the tempest which rages through the ocean and swallows thousands—lovely are all the horrors of nature when compared to the heart of a woman, who has forsaken the path of virtue, and nourishes a sinful passion.

*Ada.* Oh! dearest mother, command him to be silent.

*Adel.* His raving concerns not us.—I desired you would disclose to me my destiny. Do so if you can, and speak mildly.

*Dag.* Require you mild and gentle terms of me?—No, wife of Dagobert, my words shall be thunderbolts to thy soul. Thou didst once wear the semblance of innocence,—from thy lips proceeded the words of virtue—thou wert to thy Dagobert every thing—he every thing to thee.—Thou didst vow to him eternal fidelity and love—and now art about to disgrace his memory by giving thy hand to an usurper—to the usurper who robbed thee of thy husband.

*Adel.* Hold!—Robbed me of my husband!

*Dag.—(Aside.)*—Oh, I can refrain no longer.—*(Aloud.)* Robbed thee of *me*, Adelgunda.

*Adel.* You!

*Dag.* Woman, this dagger can wound none but the guilty. If Adelgunda be innocent, let her approach.

*Adel.—(Approaches him.)*—I am innocent.

*Dag.—(Throws his hat away and opens his mantle.)*—Adelgunda!

*Adel.* Gracious Heavens!—Oh! beloved shade, take me to thee.

*Dag.* Dost thou still love me?

*Adel.* For ever! For ever!—*(Sinks senseless into his arms.)*

CLODOMIR *rushes in.*

*Clod.* Wretch, I have heard all.

*Dag.* Then hast thou heard too much.—(*Stabs him.*)—Report to hell who I am.

*Clod.* Help!—Oh!—(*Reels a few steps, falls and expires. Adel. sinks into the arms of* Ada, *who conducts her to a couch, and bathes her with tears.*)

*Dag.*—(*Kneels.*)—Just Judge of all mankind, thou knowest how free my bosom was from every murderous intention. The love of my people, of my wife, and of my child, have urged me to it. Grant me thy forgiveness and guide me on the path, to which thy providence has led me.——Adelgunda, farewel —— farewel, my Ada. Oh, I must press thee to my heart, should the traitors murder me in the act. What an hour of ecstasy and horror!—Give thy mother this kiss. I must fly. Farewel.

*Ada.* Oh, if you be indeed my father, assist my mother.

*Dag.* I am thy father—but pray to heaven for aid. I must fly. [*Exit.*

*Adel.*—(*Slowly raises herself, espies him as he leaves the room, and starts back.*)—There! There!

*Ada.* Oh, my mother, hear me.

*Adel.* Ada!

*Ada.* Your Ada is here.

*Adel.* How horrible! how horrible!—Where am I?—Why does his shade pursue me with that threatening look?——He drew his dagger against me.

*Ada.* Who, my mother, who?

*Adel.* A dreadful dream oppressed me. I saw thy father—he wanted to murder me.

*Ada.* Murder you! No, dear mother. He was kind towards you.

*Adel.* Kind! Did you see him too?

*Ada.* Surely I did. I saw him on his knees, praying to heaven—

*Adel.* Praying!

*Ada.* Yes, and then he pressed me close to his beating heart, and gave me a kiss for you.

*Adel.* And left me without saying farewel—me—his Adelgunda!

*Ada.* He kissed you, and wept over you, as you lay senseless on the couch.—But see, mother! There lies Clodomir, whom he killed.

*Adel.* Heavens! Who killed him?

*Ada.* The man—my father.

*Adel.* I was not deceived then?—He lives—my Dagobert still lives.—Protect him, guardian angels!—But will he not, must he not, fall a victim to the tyrant?—(*Espies* Grimbald.) Oh God!

*Enter* GRIMBALD *and* BRUNO.

*Gri.* You start at my approach, queen; what a weight of sorrow hangs upon your brow! Why thus waste in sighs and lamentations the best part of your life? Is there on earth any thing, which has been denied you? Is not every one eager to anticipate your wishes?

*Bru.*—(*Espying* Clod.)—What do I see?—Clodomir murdered!

*Gri.* Murdered! Clodomir! My friend!—Who has been here? Haste, Bruno, try to discover the author of this bloody deed, and bring him hither instantly.—Queen, this disordered look—pardon me, if my just indignation leads me too far—but on your gloomy brow I read——tell me, who murdered Clodomir?—You must know.

*Adel.* 'Twas I.

*Gri.* You!—Know you the consequence?—Who gave you power over his life?—But how can I for a moment think the gentle Adelgunda capable of such a deed!—

Queen, I once more beseech you to confess who is the murderer.

*Adel.* He fell by the hand of his judge—who is thy judge also. [*Exeunt* Adel. *and* Ada.

*Gri.*—(*Looking after her with an astonished mein.*)—How can I solve these mysterious words?—She was the murderer! —'Tis well. If it be true, she shall pay dearly for the loss which I sustain.——(*Turns to* Clod.)—Poor boy! Thou hadst raised thyself to my favour by a chain of crimes, and now——I did not wish to part with thee so soon, for thou wert certainly an useful slave. First should thy hand have dispatched Clovis; then mine had sent thee after him. But another instrument of vengeance may be found.—Guards! Bear that body away.

*Enter* BRUNO.

*Bru.* The murderer of Clodomir is in your power.

*Gri.* You are mistaken. Adelgunda herself inflicted the deadly blow.

*Bru.* She!—Impossible!—I have secured the assassin, and he will soon be here.

*Gri.* Who is he?

*Bru.* The soothsayer, whom Clodomir himself brought to the palace. I introduced him to the queen in this room by Clodomir's desire, and no one else had entered it. I found him with Clovis.

*Gri.* With Clovis!

*Bru.* Yes. I took some of the guards with me, who secured him. As soon as I accused him of the murder, he and Clovis turned pale, and both forgetting themselves, exclaimed: "We are lost." Clovis then attempted to deny the fact, but I declared that the queen had accused the soothsayer.

*Gri.* Tis well. Did you secure Clovis also?

*Bru.* My orders did not extend so far.

*Gri.* Is this the effect of my reliance on you? Was not treachery manifest? Is it not evident that the soothsayer is an assassin hired by Clovis—and that his dagger was directed against me—against the King? Bruno, as you value your life let Clovis be secured.

*Bru.* I hasten—

*Gri.* Hold!—I have my reasons—you must bring Clovis hither by the most private way.—Now go.—(*Exit* Bru.)—It is evident that he intended the blow for me, and that this viper the queen was privy to the plot.—Thanks be to Hell, for inspiring her with such an idea. Clodomir, thy death is of more service to me than was thy whole life. She shall not escape the lot my policy has fixed for her. To my son will I unite her—then may she weep till her sighs choke her.—And thou, Clovis!—We will see whether thou can'st escape me?

*Enter* DAGOBERT, *guarded.*

*Gri.* Ha! Art thou the murderer of Clodomir.

*Dag.* Punishment sooner or later overtakes every villain.

*Gri.* Who employed thee to do this?

*Dag.* God the avenger. His approbation is my reward.

*Gri.* Who art thou, wretch?

*Dag.* Who am I?—Oh, wert thou free as angels from every other crime, my name would be thy condemnation.

*Gri.*—(*Aside.*)—This voice thrills through my veins.—Does my coward heart deceive me?——By Heaven, I'll dive into the mystery.—(*Approaches* Dag.)—Thou miserable hireling, who—(*Starts back unable to proceed.*)—Ha!——Away with him!—Confine him in the deepest dungeon.—All your lives are answerable for his safety.

*Dag.* Once more, Grimbald, I assure thee that punishment sooner or later overtakes every villain. [*Exit guarded.*

*Gri.* Thee it shall soon overtake, by that hell which sent thee.—*(Throws himself upon the couch.)*—How could I be thus alarmed? That courage, which nothing could hitherto appal, at once forsook me.—Is this the enjoyment of greatness so hardly earned—this the reward of daring enterprizes, sleepless nights, and years of anxious hope?—But of what need I be afraid? He will die as a murderer, and all who have recognized him, as his accomplices.——Childebert must know nothing of this——But Clovis comes. I must collect myself.

*Enter* BRUNO *and* CLOVIS *with guards.*

*Bru.* I have brought Clovis hither according to your command.

*Gri.* Knight, I must confess I never expected to find in you that base littleness of soul, which is capable of treason and assassination. But you see the hand of God protects the king.

*Clo.* I wish not to converse with thee.—I detest thee.

*Gri.* The conciousness of thy infamy binds thy tongue.

*Clo.* Peace, villain! Thy very looks declare thy infamy.

*Gri.* Audacious boy! Thou wishest by this defiance to shew thyself worthy of the death which awaits thee.—But let us converse calmly. Who is this expert regicide? Perhaps his own inclination led him to make the attempt. Perhaps you, Clovis, are innocent.

*Clo.*—*(Attempts to snatch a sword from one of the guards.)*—I should be worthy of hell if I did not send thee thither. ———Almighty God! Let thy thunder destroy this villain or me.

*Gri.* The sword of the executioner shall dispatch thee—

Bruno, confine him in a secure dungeon of the castle. Anon, you shall receive further orders from me.

*Bru.* Follow me. [*Exeunt* Bru. Clo. *and guards.*

*Gri.* Now, Fortune, aid me in the execution of the work, which by thy assistance, I have so happily begun.

END OF ACT II.

## *ACT III.*

SCENE.—*A Saloon.* *Enter* GOMAR, *conducted by an old Soldier.*

*Gom.* This, then, is Siegbert's saloon?

*Sol.* It is.

*Gom.* Let me not wait long, old man. Every moment of this day which is not actively employed, is criminally employed.

*Sol.* Heaven bless you, noble knight!—But see, the Queen approaches. [*Exit.*

*Enter* ADELGUNDA.

*Adel.* It is so long since I beheld you, Gomar, that I scarcely recollect you. My eye is quite unused to the sight of worthy men. Welcome.—(*Presents her hand to him.*)—You live comfortably, I hope.

*Gom.* I live ever ready to sacrifice my existence for your welfare.

*Adel.* I thank you, faithful Gomar. You are not in your proper sphere. A camp was always more agreeable to your feelings than a court. You live retired, no doubt?

*Gom.* I do, gracious queen—retired, unregarded,—by many despised. Yet—(*With energy.*)—would it not be a disgrace to my honour and sentiments if I lived otherwise in these times?

*Adel.* You are the man I expected, Gomar, would remain. The times have not altered you.

*Gom.* In truth, as little as I have altered the times. When I have resolved on a particular journey, I do not turn and abandon my purpose, because the cold north wind blows in my face.—But may I request to know without delay why you have sent for me?

*Adel.*—(*Fearfully.*)—Does any thing of importance call you away?

*Gom.* Gracious lady, the most important in the world.

*Adel.* Oh, Gomar, and my petition—it concerns the life—oh!

*Gom.*—(*With ardour.*)—Yes, Queen, it concerns your life—the life of my monarch and my friend—the welfare of a nation—my honour and my duty.

*Adel.* Gomar, you know, then—

*Gom.* All—that he is arrived—that treachery has obtained his imprisonment—that death awaits him.

*Adel.* How learnt you this?

*Gom.* I saw and conversed with him to day, at the very time that the herald announced your nuptials through the city.

*Adel.* And did he hear the herald?

*Gom.* He did, and his firm mind sunk beneath the blow. It sounded to his ear like the curse of God upon the awful day of judgment. He instantly resolved to gain admittance nto the palace, to see you, and cast a look into your heart. Providence directed his steps otherwise, and required his arm to punish that villain Clodomir.

*Adel.* No, Gomar! You do not know all. I too saw him. Clodomir surprised him in my arms, and he slew the villain that he might not be betraved.

*Gom.* You saw him!

*Adel.* Oh, Gomar, I cannot describe to you how his look

pierced to my soul. Joy and fear assailed my heart so violently that my senses fled.

*Gom.* But what will be the end of these preparations for the nuptial feast?

*Adel.*—(*Gives him a parchment.*)—Read that.—(Gom. *reads.*)—Oh God, thou didst inspire my soul with the thought—grant me strength to execute it, when the destined hour arrives.—(Gom. *has perused the parchment, and gazes at her with astonishment and admiration.*)—On what are you meditating?

*Gom.* Great woman!—Heaven will not allow the guilty to triumph, but—(*Pointing to the parchment.*)—your life is in evident danger.

*Adel.* Oh, let me fall if he be saved.

*Gom.* Can I be said to save a man, if, in order to guard him against poison, I plunge a poniard in his heart? No, queen, I cannot allow this.

*Adel.* Where will you find assistance?

*Gom.*—(*Shewing his sword.*)—Here. There are many, who will be ready to support our cause. Before the nobles of the land will I describe your virtues and exalted resolution. I will speak to them as becomes the man, who is speaking for his king and native land.

*Adel.* Oh may Heaven add strength to your words!

*Gom.* Doubt it not.—But one thing more would I know ere I leave the palace.

*Adel.* What is it?

*Gom.* I must speak to my monarch and to Clovis. Know you who guards the dungeon?

*Adel.* Alas! Gomar! I too have, for an hour, been devising means of gaining admittance to the dungeon. How if I were, in person, to request of Childebert an interview with Clovis. If I beg this as his first favour to his bride,

he will not deny it, especially as he has no suspicion but that my husband is a stranger—and a murderer. I know that Bruno was commanded by Grimbald to conduct the two prisoners towards evening into one dungeon.

*Gom.* Into *one* dungeon. There, then, it is intended to execute them.

*Adel.* Oh Gomar!

*Gom.* Believe me, Grimbald has recognized him.

*Adel.* No, dear Gomar, he cannot have recognized him, or he would act otherwise towards me.

*Gom.* Be that as it may, we must attempt his rescue immediately.

*Adel.* Hark! I thought I heard some one.—Heavens! how much more had I to say!—But I must withdraw.—My friend, bear in mind the fate of your unfortunate monarch. Be the protector of virtue, and animate your friends—oh, could my tears accompany your words——Gomar, tell them that I thus implore their aid.—(*Kneeling.*)—Let me—let me—noble Gomar—Behold a weeping wife—oh, save, save my husband, and to thee will I eternally acknowledge my obligations for happiness and life.

*Gom.*—(*Raising her.*)—Queen, you have filled my soul with anguish. Compose yourself. My zeal for your welfare and the welfare of my king cannot be inflamed. Am I not bound to exert every nerve by all that is most sacred to me?

*Adel.* Farewel, then, worthy man. May thy words be as irresistible, and thy deeds as successful as thy enterprize is great and noble. Farewel. [*Exit.*

*Gom.* Heaven be thanked for having sent us this angel in our distress!—(*Re-perusses the parchment.*)—Ha!—What must a man do in such a case.—(*Hears footsteps, and hastily conceals the parchment.*)

*Enter* BRUNO.

*Bru.* Ha! You really here, Gomar?

*Gom.* Yes, Bruno.

*Bru.* I thought I saw you in the court of the palace, and the sight was so extraordinary that I resolved to see whether it was true or not. I was looking for you—

*Gom.* And have found me here. Why, truly, Bruno, I myself scarcely know how I found my way hither. I believe ten years have elapsed since I was under this roof.

*Bru.* And for what reason are you come to-day. May I know it?

*Gom.* No.

*Bru.* Why?

*Gom.* Because you are a courtier.

*Bru.* Gomar, I know what this word implies, when you use it. I feel the reproach—but it is well that I have an opportunity of conversing with you. Why do you always treat me with mortifying contempt? I have often called at your house, but you had always instructed you servants not to admit me. This has hurt me. Why did you act thus towards me?

*Gom.* I was afraid that you might not agree with me as to the proper title of your King, in which case I should have set fire to my own house, which as much belongs to me as this palace—does *not* belong to your king.

*Bru.* I do not comprehend a word of this!

*Gom.* So much the better, for I said it a day too soon.—But why say more! Farewel.

*Bru.* Gomar, you shall not leave me with hatred or contempt. Hear me.—Do you think I am a courtier by choice? That am I not. You know that I was educated by your father. He adopted me as his child, and was to me more

than a father.—*(Much affected.)*—Many a tear do I shed when I recollect his kindness. My happiness and hopes were buried with him. Forsaken and without help, necessity compelled me to enter into the service of the great.

*Gom.* Forsaken and without help!

*Bru.* What recourse was open to me?

*Gom.* Recourse!—Bruno, what was my father's name?

*Bru.* Gomar.

*Gom.* And what is mine?

*Bru.*—*(Starts.)*—Oh, I understand you.——Generous man, how shall I thank you? Behold me at your feet. —*(Kneels.)*

*Gom.* Shame on that courtier's attitude!—Degrade not human nature.—Why did you form so wrong an opinion of me as to fancy that I inherited nothing from my father but his name and property? Why did you leave my house? Was it not your home? Did I not call you my brother?

*Bru.*—*(Rushes into his arms.)*—Thank heaven my heart once more beats against the bosom of a worthy man. I myself now feel better than I was. Farewel, splendid palace, thou grave of liberty, thou cradle of vice. Oh Gomar, I beseech you lead me away.

*Gom.* No, Bruno. You must remain here.

*Bru.* Remain!

*Gom.* The duty of a worthy man is to serve his native land and justice. Will you do this?

*Bru.* How humiliating is the question!

*Gom.* Stay where you are, then—and now tell me where Clovis and the stranger who killed Clodomir are?

*Bru.* Both in prison.

*Gom.* Can you conduct me to them?

*Bru.* Gomar!

*Gom.* Can you do this, I say?

*Bru.* Dare I if I can?

*Gom.* How!

*Bru.* I have sworn to be faithful and silent. Should I be worthy of your friendship, if I—

*Gom.* To whom did you swear fidelity?—To an infamous traitor.—Yes, Bruno—why shall I check the sentiments of my overflowing heart? Why, like a slave, close my lips, and confine my tumultuous thoughts within this prison?—I tell thee, Bruno, thou hast combined with vice to oppose every thing great and noble under the sun. Thy oath is a crime. Among honest men oaths are unnecessary, and he who is not bound by an inward sensation of duty, will never be bound by a word. The villain, who required an oath of thee, thought thee a villain like himself, and if thou didst swear, thou—I am ashamed of finishing the sentence.

*Bru.* Did you come hither to insult me?

*Gom.* That I may not insult you, I will go.

*Bru.* Gomar—your virtues are surety that you require nothing of me which is wrong—I will conduct you to the prisoners.

*Gom.* When?

*Bru.* In two hours I shall bring them both into one dungeon.

*Gom.* I cannot come so soon. I do not know how long business may detain me with some friends.

*Bru.* You will find me ready at any time.

*Gom.* Enough! Farewel. I hear some one. [*Exit.*

*Bru.* I fear the warmth of grateful friendship has led me too far. Every thing to-day appears to me dark and mysterious, as if some great event were about to happen.—But what Gomar undertakes cannot——

*Enter* GRIMBALD.

*Gri.* Was nobody here just now?

*Bru.* Nobody.

*Gri.* Then it was a shadow which fled from the saloon.

*Bru.* I believe it was Gomar.

*Gri.* Gomar! What brought him hither? What said he?

*Bru.* He withdrew as I entered.

*Gri.* I am sorry I did not meet him. He is a worthy man.

*Bru.* He is indeed.

*Gri.* Did he not speak of Clovis?

*Bru.* To me he said nothing.

*Gri.* The king comes.—Go.—(*Exit* Bru.)—Oh that I could shake the weight of twenty years from me! Matters should then wear a very different appearance.

*Enter* CHILDEBERT.

Have you signed the sentence?

*Chi.* I cannot. Does not my duty require that I should hear the accused before I condemn?

*Gri.* Is not the crime sufficiently glaring? Is not my accusation of sufficient consequence? Must I prove the treachery of Clovis by challenging him to combat?——Duty, say you? Is it not duty, then, to obey your father, and to follow his wiser counsel?

*Chi.* Tell me—am I a mere shadow or a being? Are you the king, and do I bear the empty name? Judge then—decide—murder—on your soul rest the sentence, not on mine. Is Clovis not a Frank?—The privileges of every Frank—

*Gri.* Instruct me at another time, sage legislator—at present answer me—shall Clovis die with the soothsayer?

*Chi.* Punish the latter as he deserves—but Clovis is a Frank. He must be heard, and if he be guilty, he shall also suffer.—

*Gri.* Guilty! He is guilty of high treason.* Witnesses are ready to prove it. Of course, therefore, he has no further privilege as a Frank.

*Chi.* Oh, I beseech you, my father, do not distress me to-day, the day of my marriage.

*Gri.* Does Adelgunda abide by her determination?

*Chi.* She does.

*Gri.*—*(Aside.)*—She has not recognized him, then.—Or does she perhaps—

*Chi.* But supposing she had altered her intention—

*Gri.* I should not have been surprised, for circumstances are altered so materially that—but believe me the foundation of her conduct was artifice. She wished by opposition to enhance the value of the sacrifice. Be assured pride or self-love is the strongest passion of which a woman is susceptible. Adelgunda has been a queen, and she will do any thing rather than cease to be a queen. Yet if it be true that you have an utter aversion to this alliance, why, then—

*Chi.* What then, my father?

*Gri.* If I have thought your union with Adelgunda absolutely necessary, it was because I wished your throne and life to be protected from the power of Clovis. In the scale of our fortune nothing was wanting—but the destruction of that man.

*Chi.* Who, nevertheless, is not a villain, if I know him.

* This was the only crime for which a Frank could be executed. Hence the scruples of Childebert.

*Gri.* You know him! how is that possible, when you do not know yourself. Your eye is dimmed by prejudice, and is misled by the varnish, which most men draw over their characters. Age and experience will teach you the truth of my doctrine. The heart of man is the abode of vice. Virtue is but the mask which covers it. You will, therefore, never be happy and secure but by possessing power—you will never be powerful but by knowing the weaknesses of mankind. Learn the art of dissimulation. It serves to conceal your own defects, and pry into those of others. Never appear what you are—you will thereby pay measure for measure. Feel that you are a king, and act as lord over all. Endeavour to bend the nobles beneath your sceptre—they, in return, will teach the lower ranks submission, and in this protect them; for, of course, you must feel that you never can be greater than when every one else is far beneath you. In short, that I may return to our former subject—when Clovis is no more, you may chuse a partner of your throne. I repeat that his blood was wanting in the scale of your fortune, and justice offers it.

*Chi.* Has he really deserved death?

*Gri.* Dost thou think thy father——?

*Chi.* You are the judge—consider that—you are the judge.

*Gri.* Enough! I shall bring the sentence to your private room for signature. [*Exit.*

*Chi.* I'll follow you—Oh, how do I abhor this eagerness to shed the blood of unfortunate fellow-creatures! Even now I tremble at the thought of signing the sentence.— — Wretched, wretched is he, who is obliged to condemn, while he himself has reason to dread the condemnation of an all-knowing judge. [*Going.*

*Enter* BRUNO.

*Bru.* My liege!

*Chi.* What want you, Bruno?

*Bru.* Ada sends me. She wishes to converse with you for a few moments.

*Chi.* Ada!——Enough! Tell her I shall return immediately.—*(As he goes.)*—Was she alone when she sent you?

*Bru.* She looked fearfully around—I thought as if afraid of being perceived by the queen.

*Chi.* Was she melancholy?

*Bru.* She could scarcely refrain from tears.

*Chi.*—*(Aside.)*—What mean this? Again as heretofore my heart beats at the mention of her name.—*(To* Bru.)—Tell her I shall soon be here. [*Exit.*

*Enter* ADA.

*Ada.*—*(Trembling.)*—Where is he?

*Bru.* He will return in a few minutes. He did not expect you so immediately.

*Ada.* I thank you, Bruno. Let me await his return, alone.—*(Exit* Bru.)—Oh God, who didst inspire me with these feelings, lend me thy aid. I will wrench the dagger from my mother's hand that vengeance may not overtake her.—Can such an act be wrong?—No. A voice within me declares it otherwise. Oh Childebert, I feel that I could hazard far more.—Much as this step costs me, I could to save thee—yet, wretch that I am!—I may not declare what I feel—I may not hope.

*Enter* CHILDEBERT.

*Chi.* Ada already here! Is it in my power to serve you? Speak! Command.

*Ada.*—*(Confused, and for some time in vain attempting to speak.)*—Oh Heavens!—*(Seats herself and hides her face.)*

*Chi.* What means this?—I own that I have ever thought your looks dejected, but never was the sorrow of your heart so evident as now. Tell me, I beseech you, the cause of your distress.——You are silent.—Oh recal the picture of our childhood, when friendship bound us to each other, when hand in hand we passed whole days in careless pleasures. Had Ada then a thought which was not known by Childebert——and now suspicious, reserved towards him?—Unhappy change!

*Ada.* Alas!—Childebert became a king—and I—I was doomed to weep—

*Chi.* And to hate me.

*Ada.*—*(Starts.)*—Hate *you*, Childebert!——Oh pardon me—I was dreaming of our earlier years.

*Chi.*—*(Kneeling and with fervour.)*—Dream on, dream on, lovely Ada. Oh, am I the Childebert, whom formerly—

*Ada.* What mean you——*King?* Release me—let me go to my mother.

*Chi.* Pardon me.—I forgot myself—forgot the curse of Heaven which rests upon me, and makes me in Ada's eyes detestable.——But Bruno told me that you wished to see me.

*Ada.*—*(Aside.)*—Oh that I durst speak of my father!—*(Aloud.)*—My mother requests you will permit her to have a conversation with Clovis in his prison.

*Chi.*—*(Starts, and is thoughtful for a few moments.)*—The queen's wishes are my laws. I will instruct an unknown

but faithful man to be her guide.—*(Aside.)*—And that man shall be myself.

*Ada.* Will you allow me to accompany her?

*Chi.*—*(Embarrassed.)*—If.—*(Aside.)*—What means this? Ada wishes to see Clovis.—Happy man—happy even at the brink of the grave?

*Ada.* Oh heavens! What say you?

*Chi.* I was—no—fear not, for———why are you thus alarmed?

*Ada.* Childebert, if I might ask another favour—

*Chi.* What?—Ask any thing—every thing—what I would most willingly grant is—my life.—Oh speak!

*Ada.* Do not—do not solemnize your marrige with my mother—at least do not to-day—I conjure you by the joys and friendship of our earlier years—I cannot, dare not say more. [*Exit hastily.*

*Chi.* Never, never, never!———Oh that I were but allowed to see through the gloom which on every side surrounds me!—Can an innocent affection have crept into her bosom?—Oh why—*(Laying his hand on his heart.)*—Why do I flatter this poor fool with hopes? Would not Adelgunda long since extinguish every spark of affection for me, which she might observe in her bosom? I'll speak to her—my heart shall speak to her, and sure I am her heart cannot be silent. What anguish had I spared, what happiness had been my lot, if——Oh fool, fool that I was, to be dazzled by the arts and boundless ambition of my father?—I am now a victim incapable of breaking my chains but by plunging into an abyss of infamy.——Yes. Often have I thought that he who raises himself by artifice and villany must support himself by the same disgraceful means, or sink lower than the rank, from which he rose.

END OF ACT III.

# ACT IV.

SCENE.—*A subterraneous Dungeon.* DAGOBERT *is stretched on the Earth, and rests his Head upon a Stone.*

*Dag.* In vain!—*(Rises.)*—The regal dreams which incessantly torment me, make me the most wretched of mankind. They banish every ray of consolation from my mind. To fall from a throne to a prison is hard—harder than from a throne to the grave.—Happy is he, who has never been exalted by Fate, for the greatest of all misfortunes is the recollection of former prosperity.—*(The door opens.)*—Welcome, whoever thou art. Doubtless thou art the messenger of death.

*Enter* CLOVIS, *conducted by* BRUNO.

whom do I see? Clovis!

*Clo.* At your majesty's feet.

*Dag.*—*(Aside.)*—Inconsiderate man!

*Bru.* Majesty!

*Dag.* You see his senses are disordered.

*Clo.* That are they not. Fear shall not urge me to deny my sovereign.—*(Takes* Bruno's *hand.)*—Man, if thou hast entirely sold thyself to the usurper, I will with a single word speak damnation to thy soul. Behold before thee DAGOBERT, King of the Franks.

*Bru.* Damned be the man, who would not die for him.—But on this my shoulder rested the bier, which held his remains. I well remember it was borne to the grave by eight knights. Every one groaned beneath the burden, for we bore to the grave the happiness and glory of a whole nation.

*Dag.* A treacherous deception of Grimbald did ye bear, while Dagobert was doomed to wander an exile from his country.—I am the shadow of thy former king—Come nearer, Bruno, son of Mirald.

*Bru.* True, true! I recognize the features of my benefactor.—*(Sinks on his knees.)*—With what ecstasy does the sight of my monarch fill my heart!—But must I not be astonished at seeing you here? Must I not be alarmed when I know that you so soon must die?

*Dag.* Friend, this attitude, is mockery to me! Rise and embrace the unfortunate Dagobert.

*Clo.* Bruno, if thou dost not feel proud of having embraced thy king, thou art not worthy that the sun should shine upon thee.

*Bru.* Proud I am, and ready to sacrifice my life in his service.—But few hours are yours. Grimbald commanded me to bring you both hither. His terror and distrust made me certain some secret of consequence agitated him. He has accused you both as regicides, and orders are already given for your execution. The guard of the palace is doubled, and creatures devoted to him are stationed at the entrance of this prison. I fear the hour of Childebert's marriage will be your last.

*Dag.* Marriage! Marriage!

*Bru.* Did you not know that the nuptials of Childebert and Adelgunda were to be celebrated to-day?

*Dag.* Were—but now?

*Bru.* Adelgunda still thinks you dead. Your fate is unknown to her, for but half an hour since she spoke of this alliance, which she utterly abhors.

*Dag.* And yet submits to it?

*Bru.* Because she must.

*Dag.* Almost do I doubt thy honesty, for having said that word. Who *must* do that, which he will not.

*Clo.* Perhaps some great design has caused this sudden resolution, for during the last ten years, sorrow has never left her cheek. She has lived in virtuous privacy.

*Bru.* Oh she is truly virtuous.

*Dag.* Ay, my friends—had you seen how this virtuous wife to-day clasped me in her arms, pressed me to her heart, swore eternal affection, then sunk, intoxicated with delight at seeing me, senseless into my arms.

*Clo.* You grow pale.

*Bru.* How! Did she recognize you?

*Dag.*—*(With terrific fury.)*—She did.—*(Falls into the arms of* Clovis.)

*Bru.* Then all is lost. Oh virtue, if thou dost serve as a mask to vice and infamy, how shall we know thee!—I hasten to Gomar. I know his loyalty, and am sure he meditates your rescue. On him rest all our hopes. [*Exit.*

*Clo.* Your majesty is too much agitated. Repose here awhile.—*(Places him on the stone.)*

*Dag.* Repose amid this tempest of the soul.—Tell me, Clovis—is there in Hell a power, which does not exercise its spite against me?

*Clo.* The hand of Fate lies heavy on you, but Heaven never bestowed on man a firmer mind. The path of life is to you full of precipices—it is a track made by misfortune herself. None but a Dagobert could walk upon it.

*Dag.* Nor can I any longer. Oh Clovis, I am betrayed by her—by her, whose happiness I would have purchased.

with my blood. Friend, grant me some little consolation if thou canst. The blow has reached my very heart.

*Enter an* OFFICER.

*Off.* I give you both notice to prepare for death in half an hour. From respect towards you, Clovis, the execution will take place in this dungeon. This is the king's command. [*Exit.*

*Dag.* Clovis—you tremble.

*Clo.* With fury. The king's command! At the nod of a traitor falls Dagobert, King of the Franks.—Oh that my tongue could describe what is passing in my breast! Heaven, earth, and even hell would tremble at my words.

*Dag.* Why so violent?

*Clo.* Did you not hear it is the king's command—King Childebert's command—that you shall die?

*Dag.* I did, I did—but no more of that, Clovis. Nature herself has made us dread the sight of death. How, therefore, can we help it? I own, when our execution was just now announced, a tremor crept through my frame. Even a valiant man is alarmed when an unseen friend strikes him on the shoulder from behind. He turns and embraces him. Thus it was with me. Death is my friend.

*Clo.* But the king commands your death.—Who are you?—Who commands?—Who can—who dares command?

*Dag.* Clovis, disturb me not with reflections like these. The few remaining moments of my life are of consequence to my soul. I stand on the brink of eternity—but a few steps from the presence of the All-Just.—Oh my soul, transport thyself thither.—(*Kneels, and reclines his head upon the stone.*)

*Clo.* Oh providence, how wonderful and inscrutable to the mind of man are the ways, in which thou leadest to our great last destiny.—Villany triumphs in the fall of the good.

*Dag.*—(*Looks towards Heaven and seems much agitated.*) —Oh God!

*Clo.* What thus disturbs my monarch?

*Dag.* But one recollection. I was thinking of my child, whom, in the blossom of her youth, I leave to the care of her perfidious mother.—Alas, Clovis—my Ada!——Could I but once more see her! What rapture should I feel were I to find her virtuous.

*Clo.* Oh, by Heavens, I'll pledge my honour and my soul for the virtue of your daughter. Believe me she is worthy of her noble father. If nature were dissatisfied and sorrowful at the imperfections of other human beings, she needed but to look at Ada, and such a master-piece would console her for the defects of her other works. Never did external charms promise more inborn goodness, and never did the mind accord with appearances more than the mind of Ada. All the virtues have fled from the persecution of vice to her heart, that their influence might be stronger under the protection of exalted innocence, and through the power of matchless beauty. Oh Dagobert, were I monarch of the world, my dominions would not be worth a wish—

*Dag.* Well, Clovis?—Why hesitate?—How thy cheek glows? Shall I conclude that thou hast spoken the sentiments of thy heart? Why are thine eyes cast upon the earth?

*Clo.* Gracious monarch, on my knees I implore your pardon and compassion.—How could I command my heart to remain insensible at the sight of perfection?—Be not incensed at this avowal, for by sacred truth I swear it never should have proceeded from my lips, if——But why this

gloomy look?—Oh that my tongue had denied its office ere I spoke!

*Dag.* Clovis, Clovis, thou dost bind my soul again to earthly objects.—The idea, which was once transporting, is now tormenting to me. What happy prospects cheered me, when in former days I beheld the opening charms and growing virtues of my Ada.—For thee, Clovis, for thee I destined her.

*Clo.* For me!—Oh inexpressible delight?—I worthy of Ada!—Death, thou canst not rob me of this blissful thought.

*Enter* ADELGUNDA *and* ADA, *conducted by* CHILDEBERT, *disguised as a Centinel, who remains unobserved at the Door.*

*Dag.* Ha! See, see! They come to glory in our fall.—Oh shameless creatures!

*Clo.* Heavens! What means this?

*Adel.*—*(Goes hastily with* Ada *towards* Dag.)—Beloved husband!—He avoids me.—Is contempt the reward of my affection?—Is the wife, who has so long mourned your absence, spurned from you? Oh impossible!—*(Following him.)*—My husband, my husband! Turn, turn, and come into my arms that I may press you to my heart.

*Dag.* Woman, I wish not to know thee. Thou art sent by Hell. Hence! Leave my soul in peace.—Friend, what a dreadful hour! Help me to bear this trial.—*(Reclines on the stone and takes* Clovis's *hand.)*

*Adel.* Can I believe the testimony of my ears?—My husband, Adelgunda speaks to you.

*Dag.*- *(With averted face and looking at* Clovis.)—Yes. Such was the name of the viper, which once twined its folds around my heart. Oh, she seemed the emblem of fidelity

and virtue—deceived me for whole years with assumed affection, and imposed upon me by specious tenderness, while treachery inhabited her heart. She has now gained her end. To the husband whom she has betrayed and sold, dissimulation is no longer necessary.

*Adel.* Enough! I now will speak.

*Dag.* Be silent and begone. Pollute not my last breath. Perfidious wretch, thou hast sold me to Grimbald, and thyself to his son.—Away from me! Inward torture will embitter the enjoyment of thy sin, and the expectation of future punishment will fill thy soul with horror.—Away!—Oh that my prayers could save thy soul from the curse of the Eternal Judge!

*Adel.* Oh God! Thou seest what I am doomed to endure.—Why, why, my husband, do you allow your noble soul to be debased by anger founded on injustice? You are deaf to the vows of innocence and truth, as the furious tiger to the cries of the helpless traveller.——Oh Ada, in vain do I try to convince him of my innocence. He will not hear me.—Would that Gomar were here!

*Ada.* Father, you are cruel.—Listen to me, I beseech you.

*Dag.* Ada, come nearer.—Do you love me?

*Ada.—(Embracing his knees.)*—Oh my father, be not so cruel towards my mother.

*Dag.* Cruel!—She has betrayed me and herself.—No more, no more!—Again I ask———do you love me?

*Ada.* Heaven be my witness that I do. May it deny me mercy, if I ever harboured any thought respecting you, which was not dictated by duty and affection.——But my poor mother—

*Dag.* Would you love the man, too, who would rescue your father?

*Ada.* I should love him and revere him as a saint.

*Dag.* Good child!—And if this worthy man, by endeavouring to save me, were to fall with me—?

*Ada.* Oh, my father, then would compassion—but see—how distressed is my mother!

*Dag.* Yes, that is your mother, but this is the man, of whom I spoke.

*Ada.* Clovis!—How shall I thank you, worthy man?

*Clo.* By thinking me—by thinking me worthy of King Dagobert's friendship. Even the death which awaits me is a reward; for I know that I bear to the grave the favour of my sovereign.

*Dag.—(Looks at him with a smile—after a pause.)*—Oh omnipresent God, graciously look down upon us.——Ada, give me your hand, and if your father be as dear to you as you have declared, swear to me by my blood, which will soon flow upon the place where you now stand, swear to me by your soul, and all your hopes of salvation, that you will fulfil my last wish.

*Ada.* Every thing, my father, any thing.

*Dag.* Swear, then.

*Ada.* I do swear.—Alas, my poor mother!

*Dag.* Will you not listen to me?

*Ada.* I obey.

*Dag.* 'Tis well. Hear then my heart's last wish. I have lived to see that there is not a Frank deserving of my daughter's hand, except one upright faithful man. That only man is Clovis.—Give him your hand, and in the presence of the all-seeing Judge vow to be faithful to him for ever—vow never to become the wife of another, but to pass your days in holy retirement.

*Ada.* My father!

*Dag.* Ha! Thou dost withdraw thy trembling hand from mine.

*Ada.* Oh my mother, my mother!

*Dag.* Ada, thy father is here.

*Ada.*—*(Falls at his feet.)*—Pardon—be not incensed—I obey.

*Chi.*—*(Who has hitherto stood unseen at the entrance of the prison, and by his mien has betrayed the various emotions produced by the above conversation, approaches.)*—Hold.

*Dag.* Who spoke that word?

*Adel.* Oh, we are betrayed.

*Ada.*—*(Sinking into her mother's arms.)*—Heavens! That voice—

*Dag.* Who art thou? Approach.—If that monster thy king sent thee hither to listen, I will discover more to thee—I will discover what thy slavish tongue will not dare to repeat.

*Chi.*—*(Takes off his helmet.)*—'Tis I.

*Clo.* He himself!

*Adel.* He has imposed upon us.

*Ada.* Oh my mother, hide me.

*Dag.* Clovis, you see they have combined with ..... to mock our wretchedness.—Infamous, infamous!

*Clo.* Traitor, how canst thou thus boldly endure the look of Dagobert?

*Chi.*—*(To* Dag.)—I followed the queen hither unperceived. Thanks to Heaven, which inspired me with the resolution. But I perceive this is not a proper time for the disclosure of my sentiments. I leave you.—Queen!

*Adel.* Whither would you lead me?—No. I am but a weak woman, despised and hated by my husband, but nothing shall again part us. Too long has treachery robbed me of him. I find him in a dungeon. Affection and duty bind me to the place where he is. No throne is so attractive to me as this prison. Go thou to thy palace, and glory in the possession of the crown, which thou hast stolen; but

woe be on thy head, if thy power cannot annihilate hell, or thy treasures bribe thy conscience.

*Dag.* Friend, if these words proceeded from her heart.—

*Enter* GRIMBALD *and* SOLDIERS.

*Gri.* *(Astonished at seeing the queen.)*—Ha!—Who has dared to enter this prison?—Queen, who brought you hither?

*Chi.*—*(Comes forward.)*—I myself.—Father, look there, and be astonished. The man, whom you mistook for an assassin, is Dagobert.

*Gri.* Thou here too? Thou among those, who have conspired against thyself and me!—Weak fool, tremble.—Dagobert! Where is he?—Does that wretch assume his name?—Admirably managed, truly! This Dagobert, then, has started from his grave to-day, in order to commit a crime, which every one knows must be punished with death.—Let me look at him. In truth nature formed him for this deception. Such impostors have appeared in every age. But you, Adelgunda and Clovis, ought to be ashamed of endeavouring to conceal your treachery by so paltry an artifice.

*Clo.* Unparalleled effrontery! Oh that this arm were free!

*Dag.* Friend, be great and noble. Confide in the justice of Heaven, and despise the villain, if you cannot pity him.

*Gri.* No more of this audacious imposition. King, I came hither to witness the execution of the sentence you have signed.—*(To the Soldiers.)*—Come nearer. Those are the criminals. Do your duty.

*Adel.*—*(To the Soldiers.)*—Hold, barbarians! On me fall your swords!

*Ada.*—(*To* Gri.)—Oh be merciful!

*Dag.*—(*Steps forward with undaunted mien.*)—Here is Dagobert, your lawful king. Plunge your swords into my heart, and raise them stained with blood towards Heaven. There will I implore pardon for you, and a blessing on my ungrateful subjects, though every drop of royal blood cry aloud for vengeance. No more delay!—See you not that your tyrant is enraged?—Here is my breast. Turn away, if you cannot bear the sight. I myself will guide the points of your swords. But spare my friend. He has not been betrayed and dethroned. Why must he die?

*Clo.* Great, noble Dagobert, think me not unworthy of falling at your side.

*Gri.* Damnation!—Men, obey my orders.

*Adel.* Oh rather murder me.

*Ada.* Heavens!

*Chi.* Let no one dare to proceed. Back, soldiers.

*Adel.* Villain, whom dost thou wish to murder? Can regicide be wanting to fill the measure of thy crimes? No. Thou hast already committed more than can be atoned for by an eternity of punishment.—And you, soldiers, who are you? Are you Franks? Can Franks sell themselves to a tyrant? Would you murder your lawful sovereign—Dagobert, whom you once revered—whom you have seen fighting and bleeding for his country? What has he done to you? Did he ever oppress you, or deprive you of your rights? Oh, if your noble fathers could behold you from their graves, the perfidy of their children would destroy their repose. Never, never did a Frank stain his sword with the blood of his monarch.—(*The soldiers throw their swords away.*)

*Gri.*—(*Aside.*)—By Heaven this woman's whining rhetoric alarms their coward hearts.—Adelgunda, I beg you will leave this place.

*Adel.* Sooner will I lose my life, and renounce my hatred against thee, traitor.

*Gri.* By all the powers of Hell, this is too much. You have entered into a confederacy with this impostor, and your crime makes you subject to my orders. I command you to withdraw.—*(To the Sol.)*—Ye cowards, if your lives be dear to you—if you do not wish to be punished as confederates in this plot, drag her away.—*(The Sol. again take their swords.)*—Queen, I beg you will not oblige me to use force. It would hurt me to deviate from the respect I feel towards you as the widow of my beloved friend and monarch.—Go to the palace.

*Adel.* That thou may'st commit murder uninterrupted.

*Gri.* Be at ease on that account. An impostor like this, who has attempted to deceive a whole nation, ought to die in the presence of a whole nation. The prisoners shall be publicly executed. Soldiers, attend the queen to her apartment.

*Adel.*—*(Apart to* Ada.)—Let us hasten to save him.—Gomar stays too long.—Dagobert, may Heaven acknowledge thy virtues, though thou hast refused to acknowledge the fidelity of thy wife!—*(To* Gri.)—Tyrant, hear me.—An impostor who has deceived a whole nation ought to die in the presence of a whole nation. Let this sentence be executed on whom it may—it is just, and believe me every thing which is just in the eyes of our Judge above—will be fulfilled. [*Exeunt* Adel. *and* Ada, *attended by Sol.*

*Gri.*—*(Aside.)*—Ha!—Now will she hasten to obtain assistance—but her intentions shall be frustrated.—(*To* Chi.)—Her crimes make her unworthy of your hand. She must be tried by the council of bishops. She is a reptile which gnaws on the happiness of your majesty and the peace of the empire. Leave this impostor to my care. My office makes me his judge.—*(Goes to* Dag.)—Wretch, curse the

moment when thou wert persuaded by thy evil genius to direct thy steps hither. Thy doom is fixed.—Come, King.

[*Exeunt* Gri. *and* Clil.

*Dag.* Go. Thou art unworthy of my indignation.—Friend, what means this gloomy look? Why stand you thus stupified and speechless!—Clovis, Clovis, what means this?

*Clo.* Ha! Ha! Ha! Yes, dream of judges and of Hell, ye fools.

*Dag.* Horrible!—What say you, my son?

*Clo.* Son!—Oh torment! Did I not see her look with scorn at me—with tenderness at Childebert?

*Dag.* At Childebert!

*Clo.* Did you not perceive it?—Well, as you please.—She did not look at Childebert.—I am cured—and know you by what means? A grim infernal monster has devoured my heart. I have no longer any heart or blood. Clovis is no more.

*Dag.* How! Has Clovis no heart for his friend Dagobert?—(Clo. *gazes at him—and is silent.)*

*Enter* GOMAR *and* BRUNO.

*Dag.* Welcome, friends. Whom seek you?

*Gom.* Our king, and with him death.

*Dag.* 'Tis well. Death and Dagobert are nearly allied. Oh rise. Be not ashamed of embracing me.

*Clo.* Gomar—no rescue—no revenge?

*Gom.* Die, friend, unless you would live among slaves.—On my soul I would not save you were it in my power. The Franks are a degenerate race. The great spirit of our fathers is extinguished. It were idle folly to expect a noble act from a nation, which has submitted to the yoke of a ty-

rannical usurper.—It is a disgrace—oh that I am obliged to say so—it is a disgrace to be a Frank.

*Dag.* Speak not in such terms of my people, I beseech you. I love them still.

*Gom.* Then let me be silent.

*Dag.* No. Proceed.

*Gom.* I went in search of the noblest and bravest Franks whom I knew—the valiant Osmar, the stern Ragond and their friends. To them I related your fortunes and return. They laughed at me, and treated me as if I were insane. I then produced this writing of the queen, after perusing which, they stood gazing at each other in mute astonishment.

*Dag.* Let me see that writing.

*Gom.*—(*Presents the parchment.*)—The queen some hours ago commanded me to lay it before the nobles of the realm.

*Dag.*—(*Reads.*)—"Ye faithful nobles, let your hearts be open to the tears and complaints of the forsaken Adelgunda. She implores your assistance in behalf of King Dagobert. The invisible servants of the all-just God have brought him from the desarts of Ireland, to which the faithless Grimbald banished him ten years ago. In the deepest dungeon of the castle he expects immediate death from the hands of the traitor. The valiant Clovis is a witness and sharer of his wretched fate. Till now he remains unknown to his foes, and is condemned to die for having stabbed the villain Clodomir. I myself will pave the way to his release. Childebert believes he will this day obtain my hand, but at the altar and in your presence will I plunge a poniard in his breast, that Heaven may see how sacred was the vow of constancy which I pledged to Dagobert.

"ADELGUNDA."

(*Kisses her name.*)—Good angels, bear this kiss to her.—Oh faithful Adelgunda forgive my suspicions.—Friend, we have wronged her much. Deceived by appearances, I was

deaf to her sincere protestations.—Well, Gomar, what said they, when they had perused this?

*Gom.* Awhile they stood in silent wonder, till Osnar said—"Were Dagobert alive he would have disclosed it to his friends, or have come with a foreign army to oppose his enemies. Who can be sure that even the queen herself is not deceived?"

*Dag.* The cowardly slave!

*Gom.* Conversation of this nature occupied some time, till Bruno came, dispatched by the queen to apprize us of your immediate danger.

*Dag.* And when you left the assembly?

*Gom.* "Let us but see him," said they, "and he shall find that he has friends."

*Dag.* Enough! They shall see him. My soul burns with eagerness.—(*Throws off his pilgrim's habit.*)—Friends, know you this armour?—Why thus astonished?

*Bru.* Oh, what Frank does not know it?

*Gom.* You wore it when you vanquished Clotham.

*Dag.* Ay, and I wore it on the day that I was proclaimed King of the Franks.—I wore it too when Grimbald's hirelings dragged me from my country. Wilfried clasped it with a blessing when I left Ireland.—Friends, let us embrace each other—perhaps for the last time. Gomar, give me thy sword and thy hand. Clovis, take thou Bruno's sword and hand. Now follow me.

*Gom.* I understand you well. Take not my sword, but let me be your shield.

*Dag.* Friend, if I be doomed to fall, I'll fall as the defender of my faithful subjects, the last duty which, as a king, I wish to fulfil.

*Clo.* Oh my liege, let me on my knees, perhaps for the last time—

*Gom.* Do not despise my fidelity—

*Bru.* Nor my tears——*(All kneel.)*

*Dag.* My friends, my friends!—Almighty God, if thou callest me to thee, protect these worthy men, that they may be the defenders of virtue, and their native land. What a sight!—*(Bends towards the earth.)*—In God we trust.—Now come.

*Bru.* Alas, you face inevitable death. A hundred centinels guard this prison.

*Clo.* Let thousands guard it. The appearance of so good and great a king will inspire each man with reverential awe.

*Dag.* If slaves oppose us, be not afraid, for they have no courage—if valiant men, they must be noble, and will, therefore, be our friends. Follow me. I am still a king.

[*Takes* Gomar's *sword and exeunt.*

END OF ACT IV.

# *ACT V.*

SCENE.—*A Saloon in the Palace. Enter* GRIMBALD *hastily, accompanied by Soldiers,*

*Gri.* Well, men, do you thoroughly understand me?

*Sol.* We do.—*(They produce daggers.)*

*Gri.* Right. I rely on you. If you value your own fortunes, you will minutely follow my directions.—After you have done the deed, mingle with the multitude. I pledge to you my word that you shall be rewarded beyond your expectations—and what risk do you run? See, there is my son, the king, with two thousand Franks, and I shall station myself in another part of the city with a thousand steady veterans.—Unless an angel fight for them, in half an hour the accursed race shall be extinct. The woman, who has dared to oppose my power, shall give notice to hell of its approaching booty.——Take your stations. She comes.

*Enter* ADELGUNDA *and* ADA.

Adelgunda, you see the consequences of your rash conduct. Your life is in imminent danger. The people curse you, and require that you shall be sacrificed to their fury. How absurd was it by such conduct to make yourself unworthy a monarch's hand!

*Adel.* How has Heaven debased me by giving a Grimbald power to address me thus.

*Gri.* I should address you otherwise, were I to speak as you deserve.—The people say you bribed the guards that the escape of the traitor might make it more difficult to prove the falsehood of your infamous assertions. Indeed, by what other means could they escape?

*Adel.* They have escaped then?

*Gri.* No. Their hour is come. By Heaven, their death is as certain as their crime.—Osmar, Ragond, Gomar, and about four hundred more have joined the pretender. They have taken refuge in the house of Clovis from the indignation of the populace—but look—there stands king Childebert with three thousand men, and two thousand more are ready to follow me against this impostor. You may remain here, and await the account of his death. I have appointed these men to protect you, since it is evident that the people thirst for your blood. Farewel.—(*To the* Sol.)—Keep a watchful eye upon both of them, and when you hear my command from a distance, act as I have directed.

*Adel.* Stay, stay, Grimbald. Hear me. Must all the insurgents die—all?

*Gri.* By Heaven they must and shall.

*Adel.* How weak am I, that I cannot execute so good a deed!—Grimbald, you are right. Every villain ought to perish.—(*Suddenly draws a dagger from her bosom.*)—Condemned of Heaven, die.

*Ada.*—(*Holds her arm.*)—Oh my mother!—(Adel. *retreats and covers her face with both hands.*)

*Gri.* Ha, traitress! This was thy last attempt.—Did you see this, men?—Woman, the avenger's hand is stretched forth to punish thee. I go to exterminate thy adherents. If thou would'st curse—curse Heaven for having given thee being—if thou would'st pray—pray to Hell that it may swallow thee.—(*To the* Sol.)—Once more remember my commands.

*Adel.* No longer, then, does Heaven preside over the human race. Triumphant villany has bound the Judge's arm.—Why did my hand tremble? Why did my soul recoil at the idea of murder? Will Grimbald tremble too? Alas, no.—*(To* Ada.*)*—Who will ward the blow aimed at thy father?

*Ada.* Heaven will protect him.

*Adel.* Foolish girl! What cares Heaven for the fate of man?—I too once hoped for its aid, but that hope I now no longer cherish.—Oh they will murder him, and thou, poor child, wilt lose at one blow a father and a mother.

*Ada.* Horrible! Dear mother, that very thought would kill me, did not hope animate my heart.

*Adel.* Do not deceive thyself, Ada. Rather expect the worst—then will the stroke be less severe.——Hark! What shout was that—what a tremor courses through my veins! —Oh God, forgive me, if I have murmured against thy Providence.—Yes—still do I feel consolation by relying on thy goodness.—Ha! See, the people are in motion.

*Ada.* Oh my father, surely thou wilt not condemn the affection of thy daughter, if it be the means of thy deliverance.

*Adel.* See!—There goes a small band of warriors.—'Tis he, 'tis he.—'Tis Dagobert, who leads them. How proudly does he march in the very armour which he wore upon the day of our marriage.—Oh how dreadfully his sword glitters in the air.——And see, Childebert approach him.

*Ada.* Heavens! Should he have imposed upon my unsuspecting heart—

*Adel.* Gracious God! May I believe my eyes? Childebert falls at his feet.

*Ada.* At his feet?—Oh!—*(Swoons.)*

*Adel* Ada! Why this deadly paleness? Feels she so much for her father's foe? Can her heart—Ada, hear me. He sunk on his knee, as if he meant to entreat forgiveness.

*Ada.* Forgiveness!—Oh yes, he deserves to be forgiven.—I too, my mother.—*(Kneels.)*—I too deserve to be forgiven.—His heart is devoid of guilt. He swore by his affection for me that he would save my father.

*Adel.* Unhappy girl, could'st thou confide in a man sprung from the villain Grimbald?

*Ada.* I confide in Heaven, in human nature, and in love.

*Adel.* Oh may thy innocence find mercy in the eyes of God!—But fearful presages overpower my soul.—Do I not hear the name of Dagobert?—Yes, yes, it is the shout of victory. Oh, I must fly to meet him. To me—to his wife belongs his first——*(As she is going, two of the soldiers detain her.)*

*Sol.* Hold!

*Adel.* Slaves dare you—*(A shout of* victory! victory! *is heard.)*

*Sol.* Now die.—*(A soldier stabs the queen, and while two others are rushing towards the princess,* Bruno *enters and intercepts their passage.)*—

*Bru.* Unparalleled villany!

*Adel.* Oh Bruno—blood—blood.—*(Falls to the earth. The soldiers escape.)*

*Bru.* Help! Help!—*(Raises her.)*

*Ada.* Oh my mother! Alas! Where shall I seek help?

*Bru.* Gracious queen!

*Adel.* I thank thee, Bruno; my husband and I shall now be united in death.

*Bru.* No, no. Virtue is triumphant; Dagobert, king of the Franks, lives, beloved by his subjects.

*Adel.* Say'st thou so?—Oh, I no longer feel my wound. Conduct me to him.

*Bru.* Wait till we obtain some assistance.

*Adel.* From thy words I shall be best assisted. Tell me, tell me all.

*Bru.* The noble Dagobert, full of reliance on his courage and the goodness of his cause, boldly left his prison, followed by Clovis, Gomar and myself. At sight of him the centinels fled, like the damned when an angel appears to them. Thus we reached Osmar, at whose house our monarch's friends were assembled. Grimbald summoned his followers, and the people attached themselves to him and Childebert. He threatened to burn the house unless we would instantly surrender. Clovis incensed beyond all bounds rushed against him and—Grimbald fell. Our forces were four hundred men, who had to contend against as many thousands. Dagobert led us towards Childebert. Ere we approached him, several fell and exclaimed: 'Tis he. 'Tis he—and now, Childebert himself sunk on his knee. "Franks," cried he to his followers, "acknowledge your King. There is Dagobert." Instantly the air was filled with a shout of "Long live king Dagobert!"

*Adel.* Oh Bruno, how hast thou transported me! Come, come. I need no assistance. I feel no wound. Were death already creeping through every vein, it could not reach my heart, for ecstasy would bar its progress.

[*Exit supported by* Bru. *and* Ada.

SCENE.—*A spacious square.* Dagobert, Gomar, Ragond, Osmar, *and other knights are discovered, surrounded by the populace.*

*Dag.* Yes, my friends and much loved subjects, thus did your monarch drag on a wretched existence, condemned at home, and despised abroad. But dreadful as was my fate, I knew no greater sorrow than when I thought of you—than when I reflected that you groaned beneath the yoke of tyranny, and had no protector of your honour, no defender of your rights. Oh believe me, your fate lay heavier on my

heart than my own. I murmured not against the will of Providence. I prayed not that my miseries might have an end, but that my subjects might be happy. "Oh God" said I, in many a bitter hour, "spare, spare my people, and let thy vengeance be stretched forth against me alone. If ever I found favour in thy sight, listen to my prayer, and bless my subjects whom I love more than myself."—My sufferings are now at an end—and now too shall this same supplication be daily addressed to the dispenser of every blessing.

*Gom.* Oh ye nations of the earth, be no longer proud of your kings, when they sell your blood to purchase laurels. The Franks alone are happy, governed by their father Dagobert.

*All.* Long live king Dagobert.

*Enter* CLOVIS.

*Clo.*—*(Kneeling.)*—Long live my king! May Heaven reward his virtues!—Then must he be the happiest of mankind.

*Dag.*—*(Raising him.)*—Friend, where have you been?—You are much agitated—pale—in tears too.

*Clo.* I have witnessed a most dreadful scene.—I was conducting the herald, who proclaimed through the city the restoration of king Dagobert, when I came to the place where I slew Grimbald. He was still stretched upon the earth, and his weeping son leaned over him. I stopped,—for the youth's sorrow affected me deeply—when the mob rushed forward, tore the corps piecemeal, scattered the mangled limbs, and with frantic fury raised their bloody hands. In vain did I call to them. Their phrenzy knew no bounds. Childebert sunk to the earth, raised his eyes towards Heaven, then rivetted them upon me. I took him in my arms—but he tore himself from my grasp, and rushed towards the palace.

*Dag.* Horrible, horrible! Triumph not, oh villain, in the enjoyment of thy crimes. The delay of punishment doubles its severity. But where are my wife and child? Why must my eagerness to clasp them in my arms be so long ungratified?

*Gom.* I hasten to them.

*Dag.* Right, Gomar.—(*Exit* Gom.)—Alas, my friends, should such a happy day——Hope sweetened my late sufferings, and now fear embitters my happiness.—(*A cry of* "Oh she is dying, she is dying" *is heard.*)—What cry of horror is that? Who is dying?

*Enter* ADELGUNDA, *supported by* ADA *and* BRUNO, *followed by* GOMAR, *and a crowd.*

Alas! My queen! My Adelgunda!

*Adel.* Dagobert!—(*Releases herself and rushes a few steps towards him, but sinks back into the arms of* Gom. *and* Bru.)

*Ada.* My father!—(*Flies into his arms.*)—Oh, my mother!

*Bru.* This was Grimbald's last act of cruelty.

*Dag.* Barbarian that he was!—My wife, my Adelgunda! Is this the day that I so long have wished for?—Friends, friends, I feel I shall sink under this calamity.—What is my being, but the sensation of agony?—What tears have I shed at moments, when my sorrow was far less—yet now, I cannot weep.—Yet——Oh God, I do not complain—but—— the trial is severe.—(*Sinks into the arms of* Clovis.)

*Clo.* Oh that I could plunge my sword into the murderer's heart again!

*Gom.* The queen revives.

*Adel.* Dagobert!

*Dag.* My love!

*Ada.* Mother!

*Adel.* Blest am I, that my hand will grow cold while

clasped by thine—that when I am dead, a tear will trickle from thy cheek upon mine,—Banish sorrow from thy breast —ye. still remember me.—Dagobert, reward thy friends reward Childebert too. His heart is virtuous, for he loves the virtue of our daughter.—Make Ada happy—for she loves him—make her as happy as my father made me, when he united me to Dagobert.

*Ada.* Oh! my father, if my heart be culpable, let me know it by one angry look. Then will I fly, weep in retirement to the end of my life, and wash away my error with my tears.

*Dag.* Rise my daughter. Thy mother has said enough for thee—But—Clovis—

*Clo.* Heaven grant me strength!—My liege,—you see that Ada's heart gives Childebert the strongest claim to her hand.—Accept him as your son. He is not unworthy of the honour. By the wishes of the queen I conjure you to accept him, that the world may forget his first father.

*Dag.* Friend, thou art greater than thy king, for whom thou wouldst have died.—See! Her eye breaks, and death quivers on her lips.—(*Falls on* Adelgunda's *bosom.*)

*Adel.* Where is Ada?—Thy hand too—I feel—oh—Dagobert—Ada—fare—well.—(*Dies.*)

*Dag.* Oh my Adelgunda!

*Ada.* Beloved mother!

*Gom.* What a dreadful hour!

*Dag.*—(*Remains some time with his arms round* Adel. *while* Ada *kneels at her side. He now resolutely walks forward.*)—'Tis done.—She has executed the hardest task of human nature.—Break not, my heart. Keep thy sorrows closely lodged, lest the air should dissipate them.—Come, my friends. I want your presence on another occasion of material consequence.

*Enter* CHILDEBERT, *in an humble dress, and unarmed, accompanied by two knights, one of whom bears a crook, the other a sceptre.*

*Chi.* King of the Franks, dare a wretched outcast address you?

*Dag.* My friend Childebert, speak.

*Chi.* Hear me ye nobles of the realm, and ye, whom I dare not call my brethren, hear me. False ambition has misled me. It has dazzled my heart, but, believe me, not corrupted it. I was guiltless of your monarch's banishment. Like you, I was deceived by assurances of his death. I was but sixteen years of age, when my father hailed me King. Flatterers and slaves surrounded me,—they directed my thoughts, my words, my actions, as their villany suggested. I wavered between virtue and vice, though never undecided in my choice—but when my inclination and conviction drew me towards virtue, compulsion and the arts of those, who were acquainted with my weaknesses, led me again to the path of vice. The return and condemnation of Dagobert were unknown to me. As soon as I recognized him, my heart revered him.—You saw I was the first, who knelt and called him king.—I am not ashamed—of appearing before you—in this slavish habit—as a criminal. My father's crimes are punished, and—(*Sinks speechless into the arms of a soldier.*)

*Dag.* What is this?—Friend!—Childebert!

*Chi.* Oh my sovereign—I entreat one favour—let me go—I cannot bear this scene.—(*Pointing to the queen and* Ada.) —Oh! How agonizing!

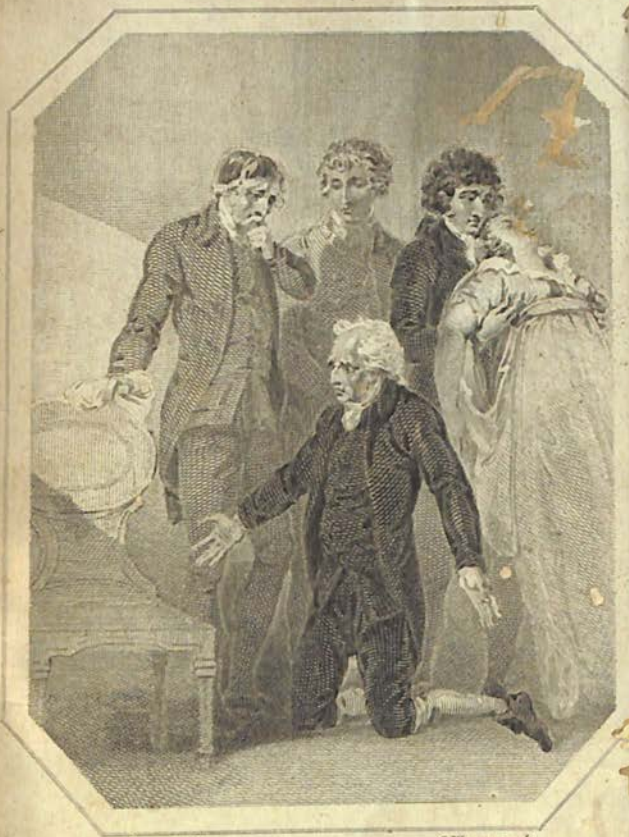
*Dag.* Friend, you have made ample amends for your late error by acting so nobly towards me. Give me your hand in the presence of this assembly.

*Chi.* Oh lead me away.—The consciousness of my error

makes your kindness a most painful punishment—There noble blood bears testimony against my blood. Virtue teaches me to curse the deed, while nature compels me to mourn for the perpetrator of it. [*Exit.*

*Dag.* Daughter, follow him, console him, and if on such a day, a cheerful thought can find place in your mind, speak to him of the happiness, which awaits you both.—We will to the temple of that Deity, who ordained that we should live to see this awful day. I will return my crown into the hands of the Franks. Accumulated sorrows have made the burden too heavy for me. To-day I have drank the last drop of the cup of misery, which will embitter my remaining days. Yet will I be a father to my people. My counsels shall be united to the monarch's power, and from this union, with Heaven's assistance, shall our native land find happiness and peace.

THE END.



T. Thurston del. C. Warren sculp

# Conscience.

*Act the last, Scene the last.*

Published August 1st 1800 by Verner & Hood Poultry

# CONSCIENCE.

A

*TRAGEDY,*

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS WILLIAM IFFLAND,

BY

*Benjamin Thompson, Esq.*

London:

PRINTED FOR VERNOR AND HOOD,

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1805.

752.
T. F. Tom

*DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

Mr. WEHRMAN, *in Office under Government.*
Mr. TALLAND.
LEWIS, *his Son, Secretary to Wehrman.*
RATHING, *Talland's Son-in-law, and an Advocate.*
BOLFELD, *Comptroller of the Customs.*
ELLOT, *an Emigrant Farmer.*
HENRY, *Talland's Servant.*

Mrs. RATHING. *Talland's Daughter.*
FREDERICA SOLTAU.
Miss BOLFELD, *Sister of Bolfeld, and Talland's Housekeeper.*

# CONSCIENCE.

## *ACT I.*

SCENE.—*A Room in* Rathing's *House.* *Enter* Mr. *and* Mrs. RATHING.

*Rath.* I SEE your brother coming. Speak seriously to him, I beseech you. His dissatisfaction with your father, his attachment to high life, and his consequent distance towards us all, daily increase.

*Mrs. R.* Alas, too true!—Perhaps he may feel still more uneasy at the alteration of my father's looks. His friends now scarcely recognize him.

*Rath.* I fear——but see, your brother comes. I will withdraw, for I should say too much, and rather hurt than support our intentions. [*Exit.*

*Enter* LEWIS.

*Lew.*—(*Throws his hat on the table.*)—What a life do we lead at home!

*Mrs. R.* Has any thing particular happened?

*Lew.* No. All goes on as usual.—My father is insufferable.

*Mrs. R.* The poor man—

*Lew.* Was worth six thousand dollars before he inherited from a stranger whom he had obliged, thirty thousand more since which time he has accustomed himself to eat half as much as is necessary, and to make himself miser from morning to night.

*Mrs. R.* The fortune which he inherited has indeed afforded him little gratification.

*Lew.* Because he—

*Mrs. R.*—*(With warmth.)*—Because his feelings are of a nature so delicate that we must respect them.

*Lew.* Very delicate feelings he must have truly, who, when in possession of a large fortune, can suffer his children to be in want.

*Mrs. R.* My husband and I do not complain.

*Lew.* But in what a miserable style do you live? No. Other means must be adopted. Such is the opinion of Mr. Wehrman too—and he is our friend. Were our father poor, we ought to submit patiently, but with such a fortune—

*Mrs. R.* Does he not live in a still more frugal way than any of us?

*Lew.* Yes—and his old house-keeper in a more extravagant way than any of us.

*Mrs. R.* She attended on his deceased friend, who left him the thirty thousand dollars. Is it not, therefore, natural that he should behave well to her?

*Lew.* He will at last, perhaps, behave so well as to prove his gratitude by marrying her.

*Mrs. R.* Lewis, Lewis!

*Lew.* I suspect the worst, when I daily observe how generous he is towards other people—how niggardly towards his children.

*Mrs. R.* Your dissatisfaction makes every thing worse than it really is.

*Lew.* He was more generous towards us before he obtained this large fortune. Our home was then the abode of cheerfulness, and he gratified all our wishes. There was not a more affectionate father in the world, or one who every moment convinced his children so completely that they were his sole delight. No sooner did his friend die, and he become possessed of thousands, than avarice and misery took possession of the house, and no one was allowed any control but the infernal housekeeper.

*Mrs. R.* I still revere my father, and though often obliged to exert my patience, I will, nevertheless, repay the sincere affection, which so often appears through his melancholy, like a sun-beam through a cloud.—Lewis, it may be in our power to learn the cause of his sorrow by persuasion, but far be it from us to attempt to learn it by compulsion.

*Lew.* My heart agrees to this, but my reason asks whether I can learn to live without eating, and if I can, whether I ought to do it, for the purpose of gratifying a whim. —I must live.

*Mrs. R.* You live in—

*Lew.* I involve myself in debt. Is it more proper that I should remain the prey of usurers, and at last lose all credit, than that I should request my father to spare me a portion of his superfluous wealth?

*Mrs. R.* You lose your credit more by your conduct than your debts.

*Lew.* What part of my conduct displeases you?

*Mrs. R.* Were I to mention nothing else, your intimacy with Wehrman—

*Lew.* Does he not visit your house daily?

*Mrs. R.* I allow that he does, and my motive for not declining the acquaintance is that I may discover his intentions. He is our father's enemy. He never will forget that, when persuaded by the artifices of a base woman, to whom

he was attached, he was guilty of injustice, and that his partiality—his refusal of the orphan's just claims, were proved by our father. The business was taken out of his hands, and transferred to the man who convicted him, whereby the injured obtained redress.

*Lew.* With far too much exultation.

*Mrs. R.* The exultation was not on the part of our father, but of the redressed.—Do you think Wehrman will ever pardon this?

*Lew.* Yet he seems pleased in every opportunity of visiting you.

*Mrs. R.* He exasperates you against our father, and attempts to convince me too that—

*Lew.* He sees our father's folly in the same light that every body sees it. No. He is my friend—my sincere friend. Through him I have been introduced to the world.

*Mrs. R.* Alas! The world, as you call it—

*Lew.* Would you have me always stay at home?

*Mrs. R.* You aim at the talent of feeling at home when in splendid parties. Of what advantage can this be to one of your rank, which is inferior to theirs?

*Lew.* Why not? Might not your husband remain an honest man, and yet raise himself by his talents above the sphere of middle rank?

*Mrs. R.* You always make references to other people.

*Lew.* And you never, though they interfere with what is your own right. Miss Bolfeld lives luxuriously, while we are starving.

*Mrs. R.* Overlook this one unaccountable weakness in our father, for the sake of his numerous virtues.

*Lew.* How am I to pay my debts?

*Mrs. R.* Were you obliged to incur them?

*Lew.* If you be satisfied with the life you lead, affection forbids that I should by my observations disturb your tran-

quillity. But be equally just towards me, and do not attempt to confine my extensive plans and hopes within a narrow circle. Act as you please in your own behalf. I can extricate myself.

*Mrs. R.* In what way?

*Lew.* By appealing to the affection and understanding of my father. If in the midst of riches he will starve, it will hurt me, but I cannot help it; me he must at least assist, unless he wishes to think as ill of himself, as the world already thinks of him. I know what I may become, and what I will become, if I have a father, who deserves the name. [*Exit.*

*Re-enter* RATHKO.

*Rath.* Your advice has been fruitless, I fear.

*Mrs. R.* Dear good William, how many cares do I heap upon you!

*Rath.* A sympathy with virtue is not care. It animates the faculties and exalts the whole man.

*Mrs. R.* When you married me, you were justified in the expectation of a considerable portion, instead of which you only receive the interest of my share in my mother's small fortune.

*Rath.* When I solicited your hand, I thought not of your portion. With sincerity I can declare that every enjoyment which I anticipated I have richly found in the possession of Maria.

*Mrs. R.* But so few conveniences of life—

*Rath.* These we shall obtain in old age.—Manhood is the time for action.—We sow at present, and believe me we shall one day reap.

*Mrs. R.* I do believe you. But forgive me if I mention what I, perhaps, ought to conceal. It grieves me to behold

men of your age, whose pretensions and whose intellects are far more limited, filling honourable offices, and enjoying the emoluments of them, while you renounce them, and withdraw from the world that you may live for me and my relations.

*Rath.* By no means—

*Mrs. R.* That you may by your mode of life accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of my father.—It is a kindness, which I cannot silently accept, feeling, as I do, its full value.

*Rath.* You value it at too high a rate! My own inclination in some degree leads me to this mode of life. I do not like the society of the world, and should feel all the horrors of *ennui*, were I obliged to frequent the innumerable rapid routs of the great. My humble meal at our little table is far preferable to a banquet.—I do not apply for any office, because the consciousness of diligence and honesty makes a man as good a character as the state can boast, and domestic tranquillity as happy a one.

*Mrs. R.*—(*Embraces him.*)—Dear good William!

*Rath.* Yet I have a care, which you can remove.

*Mrs. R.* Oh, name it.

*Rath.* Wehrman comes too often hither, and I perceive that he is pleased with your society. As to any jealousy on my part, I trust you think me incapable of it.—We know each other, and feel the value of each other.

*Mrs. R.* We do indeed.

*Rath.* I perceive that you do not object to his visits at my house, merely because you hope through his interest to meliorate the situation of your brother and myself.

*Mrs. R.* He has given me cause to hope for his assistance.

*Rath.* I thank you for your good intentions and do not doubt his, but I wish not to be promoted in such a way.

Besides, his visits do not suit our humble mode of life. He is a man of the world, who wishes rather to appear possessed of sense than feeling, and who knows how to make all his humours and desires wear the appearance of deliberate reflection. Such a man as this can never bring peace or happiness into a family—and I know no happiness but peace. Such a man can never bear to see another satisfied with mediocrity. He thinks this a prejudice which ought to be opposed, undermined, and destroyed, and it is much sooner destroyed than restored.

*Mrs. R.* I will decline his visits.

*Rath.* Not in an abrupt way—but by degrees.

*Mrs. R.* I understand you. I must, however, mention that his politeness and sympathy have ever appeared equal, and that he has never trespassed beyond the bounds of that propriety which is sanctioned by friendship.

*Rath.* Perhaps he never will. I repeat that I think him better than he wishes to appear. But for this very reason he compels us to treat him according to his appearance.

*Enter* BOLFELD.

*Bol.* Your servant. My name is Bolfeld.

*Rath.* May I enquire your business, sir?

*Bol.* In a private conversation with you I will explain it.

[Mrs. R. *curtsies and is going.*

But no. Stay, madam, stay. What I have to mention relates to your father.

*Rath.* Be seated, sir.

*Bol.* I don't chuse it.

*Rath.* As you please. Proceed, then.

*Bol.* Well—you know that my sister lives in the capacity of house-keeper at Mr. Talland's house. The poor creature

used to wait upon the late Mr. Soltau, and was transferred with the property to your father.

*Mrs. R.* Who treats her as if she were a relative.

*Bol.* Mercy on us! What do you mean?

*Rath.* What do *you* mean, sir?

*Bol.* Is not the old gentleman a grumbling, avaricious—

*Mrs. R.* Does *she* complain of his avarice?

*Bol.* In a word, he may soon, perhaps, quit this world, and it is, therefore, natural to ask what reward my poor silly sister is to expect for her faithful services and attention to the strange old curmudgeon?

*Rath.* Use more becoming expressions, sir.

*Bol.* Has he declared what she is to have? I must know how much.

*Rath.* I don't interfere with my father-in-law's will.

*Bol.* But you would like to read it, I suppose. A dead father-in-law is the best father-in-law—eh?

*Mrs. R.* I can stay no longer. [*Exit.*

*Bol.* Mercy on us! What a tender-hearted daughter!

*Rath.* To the point, sir. In what respect does my father-in-law's will concern you?

*Bol.* In a very material respect. I am my sister's heir, and she will probably not marry,—or at least I shall advise her to remain single. She is, to be sure, younger than I am, but she will doubtless depart before me, for she is of a choleric disposition, and is troubled with an asthmatic complaint in the spring. Now, should this take her off—why, of course, I step forward to claim her property.

*Rath.* Well—and what is this to me?

*Bol.* I want you to manage matters in such a way as that—that—that some sum may be fixed—some recompence I mean, for the poor silly creature's attendance.

*Rath.* No more, sir!

*Bol.* If you wish to import a trifling quantity of wine—

coffee—silk—I am comptroller of the customs—carry the goods to the right—I'll look to the left.

*Rath.* Paltry——Begone, sir.

*Bol.* You will not, then?—Well—my sister and I must go to the old fellow himself, and see what we can do with him.

*Rath.* You are capable of attempting any thing, no doubt.

*Bol.* Yes, and of succeeding in any thing. Ha! Ha! Ha! My sister says that ideas are free, but my ideas generally produce a heavy impost.—There are few men, whose dealings may not be taxed.—Your servant.——But mercy on us, I had nearly forgotten a principal object of my visit. Pray what do you think of your brother-in-law—young Talland—the secretary?

*Rath.* Why do you ask this?

*Bol.* He has paid attention to my daughter.

*Rath.* The family never wished him to do so.

*Bol.* What says the old gentleman to it.

*Rath.* I hope he is ignorant of it.

*Bol.* Well—then, what think you?

*Rath.* He is a young man, and of a warm temperament—I think you a cautious father.

*Bol.* Your ideas of me are correct. I have taken proper precautions—otherwise I should not have admitted him into the house.—My enquiries only arise from my surprise at not having seen him this week.

*Rath.* Indeed!

*Bol.* I hope he will conduct himself properly, for I am not to be jested with.

*Rath.* How do you expect him to conduct himself?

*Bol.* I expect him to keep his promise to marry the girl.

*Rath.*—*(Astonished.)*—Has he promised this?

*Bol.* He has.

*Rath.* But without the knowledge and consent of his family.—

*Bol.* He is of age.

*Rath.* Does it seem to you right that he should, without any reference—

*Bol.* His references are not my concern.

*Rath.* I must own you astonish me.

*Bol.* Why? my Sabina is a pretty girl.

*Rath.* But I think—

*Bol.* It is better not to think. For my own part, I have three objects at present in view, and the sooner one is obtained, the sooner can I proceed to the execution of the other two.—When I proceed, I generally succeed.

*Rath.* The matter requires consideration, at all events.

*Bol.* By no means. Every man knows at once whether he will or will not do a thing. If he will not marry my daughter—why I know how to act.

*Rath.* I'll speak to his father and brother-in-law.

*Bol.* That is proper—but I give notice—marry her he must, or pay dearly for his conduct.

*Rath.* One ought not to be too soon alarmed.

*Bol.* True, that has always been my maxim.—At what hour shall I receive an answer?

*Rath.* How! you must, of course, conceive—

*Bol.* I'll tell you what I conceive—that you wish to make my daughter and myself appear to the world a couple of fools. Now I never was thought a fool, and I never will be. I shall return for an answer in the course of to-day, and if that answer be not accordant to my wishes, your brother-in-law shall soon be known to the whole world for——you understand me—marriage or money—play or pay. [*Exit.*

*Rath.* Unguarded young man! what has he done?

*Enter* WEHRMAN.

*Weh.* Good morning, my dear sir.

*Rath.* Your servant, Mr. Wehrman.

*Weh.* You seem agitated—this is unusual.

*Rath.* No man is at all times on his guard.

*Weh.* Of course, you too are at length displeased with the conduct of your father-in-law.

*Rath.* Indeed I am not. My good father-in-law.

*Weh.* Good! A man like you ought never to apply a word without a meaning to it.—Were your father-in-law good, times would be better with you, and his son. He is a morose old man, who embitters your life and his own.

*Rath.* Say not so, I beseech you.

*Weh.* You will at least discover that nothing can be effected by mere submissive patience, and I have resolved to see you in a better situation.

*Rath.* I feel truly obliged to you.

*Weh.* My plan in your behalf wants nothing but your own assistance.

*Rath.* Your goodness makes me feel ashamed. I have myself no plan, and do not wish that any other person should project one in my behalf.

*Weh.* That is a fault. You should always be projecting plans. After many have failed, one may at last succeed. You must be forwarded—but you yourself must assist in obtaining a promotion. Frequent visits—

*Rath.* Weary the patron.

*Weh.* So much the better. The petitioner's request is at last granted, in order that his importunity may be avoided.

*Rath.* I should be sorry to obtain any request on such terms.

*Weh.* You may be truly useful to the state, but you conceal your virtues. When virtue wishes to be rewarded, she must become a coquette. A man of business ought to calculate at his desk as accurately how he is to shine, as a lady at her toilet.

*Rath.* I believe you are right—but I was not born to act thus.

*Weh.* We are born as nothing, and may make ourselves every thing. Apropos. Talking of ladies, I hope Mrs. Rathing is well.

*Rath.* She is, sir, I thank you.

*Weh.* She too must be introduced to the world. You both ought to occupy higher stations. A place is at present vacant which will suit you.—I have mentioned your name.—Make application.—I am sure you will be successful.

*Rath.—(Bows.)*—I must see.

*Weh.* You must act. Be not so proud as to neglect yourself. I will assist you as far as I can, and thereby avenge myself on your father-in-law. He has almost ruined my credit, and I intend in return to make him an affectionate father to his children.

*Rath.* Your words are as smooth as your thoughts, but the smoothest steel cuts deepest.—Is it not a thankless office to serve people against their inclination?

*Weh.* Who requires thanks?—I want to serve myself by serving you. The conduct of your father-in-law has cost me many a sleepless night. Mine be the game and yours the gain.

*Rath.* I am firmly resolved never to accept any thing on such terms, and seriously beg you will desist from your purpose.

*Enter* TALLAND.

*Tal.* Good morning, my son.—*(Bows to* Weh.)

*Weh.* Well, Mr. Talland, how goes it? Still gloomy and dejected?

*Tal.—(Looks solemnly at him.)*—Did you sleep well last night, Mr. Wehrman?

*Weh.—(Smiling.)*—I am, at all events, in very good spirits this morning.

*Tal.* Such a man as you cannot be so without reason.

*Veh.* I'll just pay my respects to Mrs. Rathing. You, gentlemen, may, in the mean time, shrug your shoulders at me. [*Exit.*

*Rath.* You are well, sir, I hope?

*Tal.* Rid yourself of that man.

*Rath.* We are devising the means of doing it.

*Tal.* He corrupts my son.

*Rath.* My dear sir, you must absolutely endeavour to raise your spirits.

*Tal.* My spirits are always better when I come hither.

*Rath.* Go to some watering-place.

*Tal.* It would be too expensive.

*Rath.* With your fortune—

*Tal.* Mention not that.

*Rath.* I really mention it only on your account.

*Tal.* You are a good man—a very good man.

*Rath.* You do not allow yourself even the conveniences of life. You do nothing to recruit your constitution, but suffer it gradually to decay.

*Tal.* Yes, yes—sometimes I allow myself—

*Rath.* You even forfeit your breakfast.

*Tal.*—(*Confused.*)—Who told you this?

*Rath.* Forgive your children, if affection urged them to enquire.

*Tal.* My breakfast—did not agree with me—for that reason—

*Rath.*—(*Grasps his hand.*)—For that reason?—For that reason only?

*Tal.* Leave me as I am.

*Rath.* Your goodness towards others is unceasing. It is only towards yourself you are unjust.

*Tal.* If I but act justly towards you, I am satisfied.

*Rath.* Dear sir!

*Tal.* There is the amount of interest due to you.—(Rath. *takes it and bows.)*—It is but little, yet do not bear ill-will against me, children. I—I can do no more for you.

*Rath.* Do we evince any expectation of more?

*Tal.* No—oh, no. The other property—which I inherited—

*Rath.* Let us not speak of that.

*Tal.* Old Soultau had legal heirs—I did not deserve it—I ought not to have accepted it.

*Rath.* Of late you have often mentioned this subject. Follow the impulse of your heart, and bestow a considerable sum on the heir of your late friend.

*Tal.* His two nephews are dead.

*Rath.* Indeed!

*Tal.—(With tremulous utterance.)*—They are dead.

*Rath.* Are you sure of this?

*Tal.* I am. They fell in the field of battle, to which despair had led them.

*Rath.* May not inclination—

*Tal.* Oh, no, no, no!—*(Throws himself into a chair.)*

*Rath.*—*(After a pause.)*—His niece is still alive.

*Tal.* True.

*Rath.* Act towards her as you are no longer able to act towards her brothers.

*Tal.—(Surveys him a while, rises, and grasps his hand.)*—I will.

*Rath.* The sooner the better.

*Tal.* She is in service.

*Rath.* Take her into your house.

*Tal.* Right, right! Your advice accords exactly with my feelings. She is poor, but virtuous, and I am told she possesses an enlightened mind.

*Rath.* Which she probably would not have possessed, had she been rich.

*Tal.* But what will the world say?

*Rath.* It will revere you.

*Tal.* Malice has already been industrious against me. Soltau's relations have always calumniated me.

*Rath.* Disappointment and envy made them do so. Did you not offer them a present of five thousand dollars?

*Tal.* I did, and they refused it. They would have all or nothing. They said that I had obtained the will by fraudulent means. Should I now do any thing for this girl—should I do much——

*Rath.* Has not every one witnessed the purity of your conduct during forty years? Does not the gratitude of many relieved by you from wretchedness speak for your heart? Dear sir, have confidence in yourself.

*Tal.* And if I act thus towards the girl, how am I acting towards my family?

*Rath.* If there be one of us, to whom your peace of mind is not dearer than wealth, that one does not deserve to be provided for.

*Tal.*—*(After a pause.)*—I'll send for the girl—*(Lays his hand on* Rathing's *shoulder.)*—Have patience with me.

*Rath.* Your conscientious motives are a blessing to your children.

*Tal.* I shall not long trouble you.

*Rath.* Say not so, my father.

*Enter* Mrs. RATHING, *with a bason.*

*Mrs. R.* Good morning, dear father.

*Tal.* God bless you, Maria!

*Mrs. R.* I have brought you some soup. I am so vain as to think that we make it more to your taste than at your own house.

*Tal.* I understand you, my child.—*(Takes the bason and looks at them by turns.)*—You do wrong in supporting my weak

frame.—*(They take his hat and stick, and he eats the soup.)* —I thank you—I thank you. God knows I have ever wished to make my children happy. If I have not succeeded, it was an error—a mournful error, and no one suffers more for it than myself. God reward you, Maria!—*(Returns the bason to her, takes his hat and stick, and shakes hands with them.)*—Good morning.—(Mrs. Rathing *kisses his hand.)*

*Rath.* We shall see each other again to-day.

*Tal.* Yes, but let it be here——for here I feel my only peace.—*(Draws a box from his pocket)*—This is a plaything for your children.

*Mrs. R.* I thank you. Will you not give it to them, before you go? I'll bring them hither in a moment.

*Tal.* No, Maria. My sorrowful countenance shall not damp their innocent enjoyments. Take it to them.—It is a palace, which they may put together.—Tell them it is my gift.—(Mrs. R. *wipes her eyes.)*—I must own I might have made a better choice.—A palace!—Return it to me. It is not proper.—*(Takes the box again.)*—I'll buy them a cottage instead of it. Teach them to find delight in a humble sphere.—(*Kisses* Mrs. R.)—Good morning!—(*Shakes* Rathing's *hand.)*—Good morning! [*Exit attended by them.*

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*A Room in* TALLAND'S *House.* Mrs. RATHING *is discovered, seated at a Table.*

*Mrs. R.* It is true that I am accustomed to patience, but Miss Bolfeld abuses it. How much longer must I wait for her?

*Enter* HENRY.

*Hen.* Miss Bolfeld will come.

*Mrs. R.* Very well.

*Hen.*—*(Bows and is going,—stops at the door—and returns.)*— Alas, madam, what a house is this become? You know it, to be sure, in part,—but still it is worse than you believe.

*Mrs. R.* Be patient, Henry, be patient.

*Hen.* I don't think of myself, madam, but I am sorry for my poor master. No one knows what the old maid makes him endure, and no one knows why he endures it.

*Mrs. R.* Do every thing that you can for him.

*Hen.* That I will, but I can be of little service. Matters grow worse every day, and—only think, madam, she has lately sometimes locked herself in my master's study.

*Mrs. R.* You must tell him this.

*Hen.* Do you think so?—I am fearful, for her influence is unlimited. To be sure I can't prove that she was guilty of any thing blameable—but what had she to do in the study? [*Sees* Lewis, *and exit.*

*Enter* LEWIS.

*Lew.* What has brought you hither?

*Mrs. R.* My wish to release you, if it be possible.

*Lew.* Release me! from what?

*Mrs. R.* From your thoughtless promise of marriage to Miss Bolfeld's niece.

*Lew.* What promise? The people are mad. I never thought of such a thing.

*Mrs. R.* Bolfeld asserts it.

*Lew.* And I deny it.

*Mrs. R.* I will speak to Miss Bolfeld on the subject.—Her brother is very determined.

*Lew.* A blockhead! I marry his ugly green-eyed wench, forsooth!

*Mrs. R.* Heaven grant you may be able to avoid it.

*Lew.* Has his daughter any written promise?

*Mrs. R.* My husband is much distressed on your account.

*Lew.* I pay my court to Mr. Wehrman's sister, and never thought of the other creature.

*Enter* MISS BOLFELD.

*Miss B.* Madam, I am very sorry that you have been obliged to wait, but really in such weather as this, one cannot sleep enough. I have a rheumatic pain in my shoulder too.—Be seated, I beg—*(Sits.)*—Will you take a little breakfast with one—coffee—chocolate?

*Mrs. R.* I beg to be excused.

*Lew.* What will you give me, if I decline the offer too?

*Miss B.* I was speaking to your sister.—*(To* Mrs. R.)—So you will not have any thing? Well—Henry! My cho-

colate!—I am truly happy to see you Mrs. Rathing. How happens it?—Do you want any thing from our furniture?

*Mrs. R.* Nothing whatever.

*Lew.* Then you are welcome, no doubt. [*Exit.*

*Miss B.* Your brother is a hopeful youth, to be sure.—(Hen. *brings the chocolate.*)—Put it on the table.—Now bring the table hither.—Close to me.—There!—Now go. [*Exit* Hen.

I don't know how you manage servants, Mrs. Rathing, but they are the plague of my life. Well, in what can I serve you?

*Mrs. R.* Have the goodness to tell me, as far as you can, the relative situations of my brother and your niece.

*Miss B.* That he has promised to marry her.

*Mrs. R.* Do you really believe that?

*Miss B.* Most certainly.

*Mrs. R.* Do you think the connexion proper?

*Miss B.* Why not?

*Mrs. R.* Even if your family were obliged to enforce it?

*Miss B.* Do you wish matters to go so far?

*Mrs. R.* At present I only wish to hear your opinion.

*Miss B.* Promises must be performed.

*Mrs. R.* But the alliance is not suitable.

*Miss B.* Not suitable! Let me tell you, madam, the Bolfelds are an honest family.

*Mrs. R.* That I do not deny.

*Miss B.* And as good as other people, who fancy themselves such mighty great folks.

*Mrs. R.* Miss Bolfeld!

*Miss B.* Yes, and they have upright hearts, let me tell you, and will not allow any body to behave ill to them. Do you understand me?

*Mrs. R.* You will not understand *me*.

*Miss B.* I'll tell you what, madam, I do understand you, and am not to be caught by your tricks.

*Mrs. R.*—*(Rises.)*—This is insufferable.

*Miss B.* So much the better. Why waste time in compliments? Tell your father, or the person who sent you, that the embassy has failed.

*Mrs R.* Yet you subsist on my father's charity.

*Miss B.* I want no person's charity.

*Mrs. R.* Then leave the house, and do not abuse what you do not need.

*Miss B.* I am ready to go to-day, but ask your father if he will consent to it.

*Mrs. R.* I have do doubt of it.

*Miss B.* Try then—ask your father, madam.—Ha! Ha! Ha!—I stand on firm ground.

*Mrs. R.* Are you married to my father?

*Miss B.* Heaven forbid!

*Mrs. R.* Then I cannot comprehend—

*Miss B.* Any more than other people.

*Mrs. R.* Act as you please, but I assure you I will use every persuasion which can prevent this act of folly on the part of my brother.

*Miss B.* Folly! What do you mean—eh? What do you mean, I say? Who am I—who is my brother—who is my niece—and who are you, your father and your brother all taken together, that you dare call an alliance with my family an act of folly? [*Exit* Mrs. R.

*(Miss B.—Follows her.)*—We are honest, reputable people, and will teach your haughty family how to conduct itself even if we be ruined by it.—*(Returns.)*—An impertinent—proud—abusive woman!—*(Stamps violently.)*—But I'll be revenged.—*(Throws open the window.)*—Yes, madam, go home and tell your husband that I am a match for him and twenty advocates.—I'll face him and a score like him I say.—*(Shuts the window.)*—She returns no answer.—She is in too great a passion to speak. Well, I am glad I

have made her more angry than myself.——Attack me! I should like to see the person who can gain any thing by attacking me.

*Enter* FREDERICA.

*Fre.* Can I speak to Mr. Talland?

*Miss B.* No, he is not at home. What do you want with him?

*Fre.* He sent for me.

*Miss B.* Indeed! Every body says the same thing, who wants to partake of his purse.

*Fre.* I have no such wish.

*Miss B.* Who are you, then?

*Fre.* My name is Frederica Soltau.

*Miss B.* Indeed! Sure!—Frederica—

*Fre.* The name of Soltau must be familiar to you, madam, for my late uncle had a great regard for you.

*Miss B.* And I exhibited great fidelity in his service—so his regard was justified by my fidelity—was it not, pert miss?

*Fre.* Poor people are seldom pert, and that I am poor you know.

*Miss B.* Your poverty is not my fault. I should not have cared if your uncle had left you his whole fortune.

*Fre.* Of that I do not wish to speak.

*Miss B.* Why did your father behave so ill that his brother, justly irritated, rather chose to leave his fortune to those, who acted properly, than to his relations? Mr. Talland compassionately offered you and the rest of you five thousand dollars, but you were too proud to accept it—so now you are reduced to poverty. Thus it is—arrogance precedes a fall.

*Fre.* Very often.

*Miss B.* Where have your brothers strolled to?

*Fre.* They are dead.

*Miss B.* Then they are provided for. You are in mourning for the fellows, I suppose?

*Fre.* I am in mourning for my benefactors.

*Miss B.* How do you earn your bread?

*Fre.* By service.

*Miss B.* That's right. Be humble and submissive, and all may go well. Conduct yourself with propriety and modesty, and some honest footman may one day or other marry you.

*Fre.* I'll come again, if you please. [*Going.*

*Miss B.* No. Here is Mr. Talland.

*Enter* TALLAND.

*Tal.* Who is this?—(Fre. *curtsies.*)

*Miss B.* Soltau's niece.

*Tal.* Welcome, welcome! Be seated.—(Fre. *declines it.*)—Leave us, Miss Bolfeld.

*Miss B.* With your permission—it is more proper that I should stay.

*Tal.*—(*After a moment's reflection.*)—Perhaps it may.—(*To* Fre.)—Your brothers are dead, and you have lost their support. I heard so good an account of you that I wish to supply their place. I have adjusted matters with the family in whose service you are, and you may now, if you please, remain with me.

*Miss B.* We want no more servants.

*Tal.* Remain in my house as the unfortunate and respected niece of my friend, whose place I have undertaken to supply. You have nothing to do here but to be as happy as I can wish you.

*Fre.*—(*Embarrassed.*)—Sir —

*Miss B.* A pretty offer on my conscience!

*Fre.* Sir, I feel your kindness,—and should rejoice at such an improvement in my situation—but the fear of being troublesome to you—makes me irresolute.

*Miss B.* A fine sum of money it would cost!

*Tal.* You will be a consolation not a trouble to me.

*Fre.* Though reduced to a lower sphere, I have not forgotten the sentiments created by my former rank and education, therefore—

*Tal.* You accept my proposal.

*Miss. B.* Your parents were not in the best situation, methinks.

*Tal.* Peace! You are insufferable.

*Fre.* Rather than be obliged to endure humiliation while I receive a favour, I will return to my late service.

*Tal.* You shall remain with me, and, if you please, have no concern with any one but me.

*Fre.* Your goodness affects me deeply. Such a man was worthy of my uncle's attachment. I reproach myself for any idea which I have hitherto harboured against you.—When you entered, your look, your tone of voice, at once dispelled the opinion I had formed of you.

*Tal.*—(*Takes her hand.*)—My dear child, I will—

*Fre.* Oh call me so.—(*Kisses his hand.*)—It is so long since I was addressed by that title—

*Tal.* I will—Fate has been unjust towards you.—(*Much affected.*)—I will repair this injustice.

*Fre.* With filial gratitude I accept your kind offer. Believe me I am incapable of abusing it.

*Tal.* I am sure you are. Arrange your concerns, and return as soon as possible.

*Fre.* Heaven reward you for the happiness you bestow!

*Miss B.* With permission—what am I?

*Tal.* My house-keeper.

*Miss B.* And when this beggar is admitted into the family, what shall I be?

*Tal.* My house-keeper.

*Miss B.* And what will she be?

*Tal.* What she pleases.

*Miss B.* And you really think of acting thus while I remain here?

*Tal.* I wish it.

*Miss B.* Then I'll tell you at once, that if this girl dares to enter the house, I'll walk out of it.

*Tal.* What do you mean by this language? Have you forgotten that at Soltau's death, I took you into my service from mere kindness, when you were in want of a place?

*Miss B.* Ha! Ha! Ha! From mere kindness!—There was a little policy in it too.

*Tal.* Explain yourself.

*Miss B.* Not at present.

*Tal.* If you wish to end your days quietly, and to be provided for the purpose, I am ready—

*Miss B.* No, Sir. I know what I do. If you attempt to dismiss me from your house, you will find———what you don't expect.

*Tal.* What do you want?

*Miss B.* At present nothing but that this girl may remain where she has been.

*Tal.* That she shall not.

*Miss B.* You may allow her an annual gratuity.

*Tal.* No. She shall not remain in service—positively she shall not.

*Miss B.*—(*Smiling.*)—Why are you so suddenly inclined to assist her?

*Tal.* Because she is unfortunate.

*Miss B.* That she has long been.

*Tal.* Never so much as now—now that she has lost her brothers—her only support.

*Miss B.* This is all nonsense. Play some other game.—It is better to be candid and open.

*Tal.* I am so.

*Miss B.* No. If you were candid and open, I might reason with you, but as you will not be so, I now declare that I know you hate me, but that you find me necessary and useful to you. Act as you ought to do,—then you,—your children and *I* shall gain by your conduct. But if you think proper to treat me as a cypher, I give you notice that I'll do the utmost, rather than submit to it. I have told you my resolution—now act as you please. [*Exit.*

*Tal.*—(*Stands some time, overpowered with agony, then raises his clasped hands.*)—Cursed—cursed moment!

*Enter* WEHRMAN.

*Weh.* I only mean to detain you a few moments.

*Tal.* What procures me this visit.

*Weh.* You probably know that your son has for some time paid his addresses to my sister.

*Tal.* Indeed I do not.

*Weh.* Well! The young man may have been backward in telling you from a fear of not obtaining my consent. I am accustomed to doubt and suspicion from your family, but I wish to put you to the blush. Therefore, I am willing that the alliance shall take place, if—

*Tal.* I must candidly tell you that I am averse to all alliances, which can be so suddenly acceded to.

*Weh.* But you, of course, will consent to—

*Tal.* Besides which, my son's fortune gives him no claim to a connexion with a lady of such brilliant prospects.

*Weh.* Why has he not a claim, while he has a father, who can advance a considerable sum for him?—

*Tal.* I can but advance his share of the interest of three thousand dollars—his mother's jointure.

*Weh.* But it is known that Soltau's property—

*Tal.* With respect to that property, I shall act according to my own inclination.

*Weh.* Can your inclination lead you to any thing detrimental to your children?

*Tal.* Every father and every owner of an estate has a right to act by conviction.

*Weh.* I am sorry to be under the necessity of remarking that every one is astonished at your conduct towards your children.

*Tal.* My children know me, and are satisfied. But is it not your opinion, Mr. Wehrman, that many people take great pains to make my children dissatisfied.

*Weh.* I cannot be surprised if such be the case. No one can understand the motives for your conduct. You are thought harsh—opinions are circulated respecting you—

*Tal.* Of course, of course.

*Weh.* Which are very singular, for—

*Tal.* Thus far———Mr. Wehrman, enough!

*Weh.* As it seems, then, that you object to the union, I shall forbid any further intercourse between your son and my sister.

*Tal.* That I request.

*Weh.* Yet I think the father, who, without paying any regard to the merit of the object, can even when old devote himself to love, ought not so absolutely to condemn this sensation in his son.

*Tal.* I beg no more may be said on this subject.

*Weh.* At one time you took care that the world should say enough of me. Why am I now to be silent?

*Tal.* I only did my duty.

*Weh.* And I am doing mine. I grant that revenge is the

impulse by which I am guided. But even my revenge gives way, when I can promote the happiness of others.—I do not like you, but even if I did, even if you had been my friend instead of my enemy, how could I act more properly than when I endeavour to procure for your children what is sacrificed to a harlot?—On her you squander your money, while your daughter wants the common necessaries of life, and your son is the prey of usurers.

*Tal.* Is my son in debt?

*Weh.* Of course. You compel him to be so.

*Tal.* I will relieve him as far as I can.

*Weh.* That is the way to appease me.

*Tal.* Whose business is this, but our own? Who are you that you dare—

*Weh.* A man—an injured man—one who requires private satisfaction or open war.

*Tal.* War you may find, disgraceful as it is on your part to enter the lists against an old man.

*Weh.* Disgraceful! I thank you for the warning. I go to collect my forces, and shall return triumphant—till then all overtures of peace are needless.—*(Slowly walks to him, and says, in a solemn tone,)*—Mr. Talland, you are on every side surrounded. Think of an honourable capitulation.

[*Exit.*

*Tal.* What an enemy have I created! Discontented with my own conduct, I became rigid against others, and now this rigour falls upon myself. What shall I do? What can I do?—Oh God, end my days—and soon—soon!——

*Enter* Miss Bolfeld.

*Miss B.* Have you sent for more beggars to inhabit the house?

*Tal.* What do you want?—*(Half aside.)*—In hell there cannot be a greater torment.

*Miss B.* There's an old vagabond without, who has brought his bundle into the house, as if he belonged to it.

*Enter* ELLOF.

*Ell.* Brother!—God bless you!

*Miss B.* Have you a brother?

*Tal.* Whom have I the honour—

*Ell.* There is very little honour in the case. I only wish there may be some pleasure.

*Tal.* Who are you?

*Ell.* Him, whom intimacy once induced you to call brother. I am grown old, yet surely you recollect me.—

*Tal.* I must own—

*Ell.* I do not read in your countenance a wish to know me.

*Tal.* But tell me—

*Ell.* That is what I did not wish, for when I have declared who I am, I shall probably be welcomed—for *to-night*. Well—well! I meant to reside here—but no matter! Instead of residence I shall have a night's lodging.—I beg pardon for reminding you of the term *brother*, and now introduce myself as your school-fellow. I am a fugitive—my name Ellof.

*Tal.—(Astonished,)*—Ellof!—Merciful Heavens!

*Ell.* Ellof, whom the sword and party-spirit have driven from his house.

*Tal.* My good—my worthy Ellof;—*(Presses him to his heart.)*

*Miss B.—(Aside.)*—Mercy on us! An emigrant!

*Tal.* How came you hither.

*Ell.* On foot, with little money, but much confidence.—

"Talland," thought I, "always had a regard for me.—I'll go, and if he be still alive, ask him for a bed. As for the rest, my head or my hands will procure it." With this idea I tied my bundle, bad adieu to my plundered farm, and find—what?

*Tal.* A friend—a brother!—*(Embraces him.)*

*Ell.* God be praised! To him I consign the care of my flocks and fields, from which the enemy has driven me.—Your hand! I see the tear of joy in your eye.—I am happy.—Now introduce me to your wife.

*Tal.* I am a widower.

*Ell.*—*(Pointing to* Miss B.)—But—

*Tal.* Miss Bolfeld, my house-keeper.

*Ell.* Bolfeld—Bol——Zounds!—Catherine!—Yes!—Catherine Bolfeld! My old play-fellow! How are you? How are you?—You and I have often knocked our heads against each other at blind man's-buff.—*(Takes her hand.)*—Catherine! Catherine! You are grown old.

*Miss B.*—*(Drawing her hand away.)*—Sir—

*Ell.* Pshaw! Never mind that! I am grown old too.—It is many years since we were children.—*(Takes a chair.)*—Well, comrade, how are you?

*Tal.* Old, very old.

*Ell.* Pshaw, pshaw! Though you are a widower, you have somebody to bind your temples when you have the head-ach.—Eh, Catherine?

*Miss B.* Upon my word——Sir, I'd have you to know my reputation is not to be slandered. [*Exit.*

*Tal.* She is only my house-keeper.

*Ell.* But one of the ruling sort, I suppose. When I entered the house, she addressed me with a voice as shrill as if she had whistled through a key-hole. I could not bear to have such a creature near me.

*Tal.* Custom.

*Ell.* How horrid are your looks! Cheer up, cheer up, friend!

*Tal.* I like you, Ellof.

*Ell.* But I don't like you.

*Tal.* Perhaps you may exhilarate me.

*Ell.* I, who have left every thing behind me, am cheerful and merry, while you, who are a man of fortune, sink into despondency. Shame on you!

*Tal.* Come, let me shew you your chamber.

*Ell.* And a breakfast—

*Tal.* Of course.

*Ell.* But tell me—for I must know how to act—are you governed by this hag?

*Tal.* I am accommodating, from custom, and a love of peace.

*Ell.* That means I am grown very old. Should you like to be young again?

*Tal.* Alas, no, no, no.

*Ell.* Well—a breakfast I must have before I say any more. Hungry people are not fit for a consultation.—Come. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter* LEWIS *and* WERRMAN.

*Lew.* How!—My father positively refused his consent to my marriage with your sister?

*Weh.* Most positively.

*Lew.* Yet he is not apt to destroy the happiness of others. What reason did he assign for his refusal.

*Weh.* None.

*Lew.* I must submit.

*Weh.* That would I not.

*Lew.* But what can I do, without losing my own good opinion?

*Weh.* Speak to him as your duty and his direct.

*Lew.* Can I mention his fortune without appearing to encroach upon his rights?

*Weh.* Mention me. Say that I have made you aware of a conduct, which approaches towards disinheritance.—Persist till you obtain some explanation.

*Lew.* It must be so. I will.

*Weh.* Do not suffer the torpidity of your relatives to infect you. Establish your own fortune, and remove the obstructions, which surround the old man, that he himself may breathe more freely. You are one of the few, who do not misunderstand me. Attend to my advice. [*Exit.*

*Enter* RATHING.

*Rath.* Has Mr. Wehrman been with you?

*Lew.* Yes.

*Rath.* Be on your guard.

*Lew.* Against my only friend?

*Rath.* Against the enemy of yourself—of me—of us all—of himself.

*Lew.* Why do you think him our enemy?

*Rath.* Because his mind is incapable of understanding what is felt by such a heart as your father's. If you feel any filial affection, do not listen to Wehrman.

*Lew.* That no one may interrupt my father's obstinate determination to ruin me.

*Rath.* Brother.—I do not love you less than I revere your father.—I cannot wish your ruin.—Let us rely on his parental feelings, and suffer not a third to interfere.—No good can result from it.

*Lew.* Speak more plainly.

*Rath.*—(*After a pause.*)—I dare not.

*Lew.* Why?

*Rath.* You see your father's strength of mind and body daily decay. Do you think a mere whim could effect this?

*Lew.* What else?

*Rath.* Revere his sorrows. The day may come when you would give the wealth of the whole world that you had not touched any string too violently.

*Lew.* What can I do?—Even if I be willing to sacrifice myself completely, what can I do to remove his melancholy?

*Rath.* Act as a *son.*

*Lew.* Have I ever acted otherwise?

*Rath.* It is a great title, and its tenderest duties are already in part neglected, when the mind begins to argue upon it without the heart being concerned.

*Lew.* Brother!

*Rath.* Son! [*They embrace and exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

# *ACT III.*

SCENE. *A Room in* TALLAND'S *House.* LEWIS *and* HENRY *meet.*

*Hen.* I beg pardon, Mr. Lewis—are you going out?

*Lew.* Yes. Why do you ask?

*Hen.* Your father wishes to see you, sir.

*Lew.* Very well.—Who is the old gentleman I just now saw?

*Hen.* A Mr. Ellof.

*Lew.* What does he want here? Is he introduced by Miss Bolfeld?

*Hen.* God forbid, sir! No. She seems not very well pleased at his arrival.

*Lew.* Then he is doubtless an honest man.

*Enter* FREDERICA, *somewhat better clothed than before, but still in a humble dress.*

*Fre.* Allow me, Mr. Lewis, to request your good-will and sympathy. Your father has promised me both, in the most generous manner, as you must have heard.

*Lew.* I have heard it with pleasure, and consider your abode in this house an auspicious omen. [*Exit* Hen.

*Fre.* I understand this answer only as far as it claims my gratitude.

*Lew.* Inmates of one house should understand each other as soon as possible. Why should I conceal from you, what you must have already in part observed! My father is old and infirm. A dragon has made this house her nest, and endeavours to banish his children from it. She will endeavour to procure your banishment too, if she observes any kind attentions on your part to the old man.

*Fre.* The unfortunate enjoy with gratitude the present moment, and leave futurity to Providence.

*Lew.* But Providence ordains that caution is a duty. I am naturally ingenuous, and I read something in that countenance, which would make me so, were I otherwise. Love my father. He deserves it more than I do—or rather he wants it more, for he is older than I am, though not more unfortunate. You have entered a wretched house.

*Fre.* Heaven forbid!

*Lew.* My helpless situation commands me to do what surprises even myself—it commands me to confide in you.

*Fre.* I cannot deserve this sudden confidence. Allow me time to fulfil one duty before I enter on another. Your father's kind disposition spared me all confusion—or at least greatly alleviated it. Imitate his example. The kinder he is the more attentive will I be, that I may thereby please his children. Be satisfied with this my good-will.

*Lew.* I am satisfied and ashamed of having commenced our acquaintance by an appeal of sorrow.

*Fre.* I did not wish you to think thus. Let us wait for a calmer moment, when we may, perhaps, understand each other better.

*Lew.* Shall I ever know a calm moment?

*Fre.* A feeling son may always find one in the arms of his father. You have justified the freedom with which I address you. Amidst the tempest of your soul, confide in the words of a stranger.

*Lew.* They are not the words of a stranger. Praised be Providence, for having conducted you to this house!

*Fre.* When, on a better acquaintance, I have restored your father's peace of mind, you yourself may decide what I can do towards yours. [*Exit.*

*Lew.* She must despise me. I despise myself. A weak woman has a better understanding—has more firmness and resolution than myself. I turn towards every side. A thousand wishes are contending in my bosom, and I cannot satisfy one of them. Oh I must—I must speak. My father gave being to this compound of desire and inability—and must assist me. It is his work—be it his care.

*Enter* TALLAND.

*Tal.* I have, for some time, avoided all conversation with you, because all that a father could say, neither seemed to make you wiser, nor me easier. Finding, however, that you are now in a very critical situation I must once more attempt to direct you in your progress. Lewis, at what point do you aim?

*Lew.* Rather allow me to ask at what point you wish me to aim?

*Tal.* I wish you to become a reputable, honest man; but while you thus waste time and money, how can you expect to support any reputation?

*Lew.* If you will allow that the fortunate state of your circumstances justifies me in considerable expectations, you cannot be surprised that I act in such a way as to establish for myself a proper rank in life.

*Tal.* I wish you happiness. Believe me, my son, I wish you happiness.

*Lew.* And yet refuse your consent to my marriage with Mr. Wehrman's sister?

*Tal.* Do you feel an affection for her?

*Lew.*—*(Shrugging his shoulders.)*—Does she for me?—Does any woman of fashion know what affection is?—I like her. The match will make me of more consequence, and that, according to the present opinions of the world, is a great object.

*Tal.* Are you obliged to act according to the present opinions of the world on every occasion?

*Lew.* Was the world ever better?

*Tal.* Marriages were happier.

*Lew.* Let me hear your plan, my father.

*Tal.* You are in debt. To what amount?

*Lew.* Two thousand dollars.

*Tal.* Good God!—*(Walks to and fro in great agitation.)*

*Lew.* My small salary—

*Tal.* Your expensive mode of life—your consummate vanity in associating with a class, to which you do not belong—

*Lew.* But surely, according to your circumstances—

*Tal.* Circumstances! With a fortune of three thousand dollars, it is, no doubt, justifiable to contract debts amounting to two.

*Lew.* But the thirty thousand—

*Tal.* Don't belong to you.

*Lew.* At present, certainly not, but—

*Tal.* Nor do they belong to me.

*Lew.* To whom, then? Pardon me. The question is natural.

*Tal.* It is.

*Lew.* I know that since this fortune was bequeathed to you, no use has been made of it—that you deprive yourself of the necessaries of life, in order to gratify your benevolent propensities, without interfering with the estate. I lament this. I grieve to see my sister in such confined circum-

stances, and cannot think myself happy, as you will do nothing for me, while I see the insolent creature who directs your houshold, revelling with your bounty.

*Tal.* You appear to have justice on your side, and I am sorry I cannot remove this appearance. But do not form a judgment according to it. I was many years a good father —be you a good son.

*Lew.* May I speak openly?

*Tal.* Do so, Lewis.

*Lew.* Relieve yourself from this unpleasant and uncertain situation. Bestow on this Miss Bolfeld decisive privileges rather than a dubious, dangerons influence. Bestow on her your name.

*Tal.—(Throws himself into a chair, and covers his face.)* —Not so, my son, not so.

*Lew.* I know no better counsel.

*Tal.—(Rises, embraces him, and then walks up and down for a short time.)*—Let us return to the subject. Lewis, notwithstanding the way in which you have hitherto lived, I still place such firm confidence in you, that at this moment my only hope of happiness depends upon you.

*Lew.* Speak—proceed.

*Tal.* You may refuse to do what I wish. It will be hard upon me, but never will I compel you even by arguments to do it. You may refuse this, I say,—but my command, my injunction—nay if you please—my petition never to repeat what I am about to say—you will not, cannot refuse.

*Lew.* You raise my expectations—

*Tal.* Give me your hand. Now, promise your father, whose trembling hand holds yours, that you never will repeat what I shall say.

*Lew.* I swear by—

*Tal.* Hold! Do not swear. Oaths are become the playthings of form. Give me an upright filial promise.

*Lew.*—*(Presses his father's hand to his heart.)*—I do promise.

*Tal.* It is well.—*(Releases his hand.)*—A moment—I am so much oppressed.—*(Draws his breath with difficulty.)*—Listen—Soltau's property belongs to me according to his will,—but according to my conviction, it belongs to his relations.

*Lew.* Did not those relations behave ill to him, when you acted as his sincere friend?

*Tal.* The father behaved ill—not the children. I ought never to have accepted this fortune, and cannot now return it to the person who ought to have it, without exposing myself to calumnious reports—yet I will not retain it. My children shall not have it.

*Lew.* That must be as you please.

*Tal.* You know the nature of my resolutions. One way still remains, by which you and your sister may obtain this fortune. Lewis, my son, it is in your power to bestow on your father peace of mind. This is a decisive moment.—Accede to my wish, and I will a second time thank Heaven as fervently as I thanked it, when I first heard I had a son.

*Lew.* Proceed, I beseech you.

*Tal.* You have confessed your heart is not engaged, and you only want an establishment in life. Take half of the fortune—assign to your sister the remaining half—and obtain a right to both by marrying Soltau's lawful heiress.—Do not yet reply. You have seen her. She is handsome, and every word she utters, proclaims the goodness of her heart.—Answer me not till I have finished. Reflect that you may become the benefactor of your sister—of your father—that you——oh that I could find words to describe what blessings you will confer on me by this act! It will sweeten thy dying hour, Lewis, to have made thy father

so happy, so——I can say no more.—Answer.—Give me life or death.

*Lew.* Dear father, can you doubt my readiness to obey this solemn injunction? But can you conceive that on me alone depends the power to obey it? How can your wish be represented to Miss Soltau, without conveying an appearance which must rather excite in her mind suspicions of injustice, than gratitude for your kind intentions?

*Tal.*—*(Doubtfully.)*—Lewis.

*Lew.* Should she feel no attachment to me, will she not perceive on your part an absolute necessity—I use your own expression—to do her justice? What will be the consequence?—She will refuse me—make me the derision of the world—and not make you more easy.

*Tal.* Oh my son!

*Lew.*—(*With enthusiasm.*)—My brother-in law has roused in my bosom the sensation of the duties attached to the name of son. Be assured that your blessing is far more valuable to your children than your wealth. Give Miss Soltau, therefore, without any conditions, what you think you cannot justly withhold, and be happy.

*Tal.*—*(Taking his hand.)*—I am old and weak.—Let me reflect ere I decide—

*Lew.* Allow me time, also, to try whether I am ever likely to obtain Miss Soltau's affections.

*Tal.* Be it so.—Take my blessing, Lewis—my blessing and my thanks.—There!—*(Gives him a paper.)*

*Lew.* What is this?

*Tal.* An engagement that I will discharge your debts.—I would not give it to you sooner, that you might not be induced to think I wished to bribe you. Send your creditors to me in the morning. Thanks to my economy, I can pay them from my own property.

*Lew.*—*(Falling at his feet.)*—Oh my father!

*Tal.* —(*Raises him.*)—Rise.—My son, my friend, be silent. I dare not tell you all. Were I to confess all, you would both justify and condemn me. From the fear of condemnation, I dare not attempt to justify myself.—Lewis, be silent. [*Exit.*

*Lew.* Rathing is right. A mere whim cannot have such effect on any man.—I feel as if I had no sorrows of my own, while there is a chance of my having it in my power to alleviate his.

*Enter* RATHING.

*Rath.* Have you mentioned Bolfeld's claim upon you as to his daughter?

*Lew.* Who would think of the fellow for a moment?

*Rath.* He is waiting at my house for your answer.

*Lew.* He may go to the devil.

*Rath.* Lewis, this affair becomes serious. What promise did you make to these people?

*Lew.* I can swear with truth that I don't know—they made me drunk.

*Rath.* Have compassion on your father, and compromise the matter.

*Lew.* How can I? Bolfeld will not be satisfied but by a considerable sum of money. Let him bellow and bawl as usual. He cannot make my father alter the favourable sentiments of me, which he has even this moment avowed.—No, no. I care not for him or that harridan his sister.

*Enter* MISS BOLFELD.

*Miss B.* Who is a harridan, sir—eh?

*Lew.* She, who listens.

*Rath.* What do you want here?

*Miss B.* Nothing with you. I want to speak to Mr. Lewis.

*Rath.* Speak respectfully, or by Heaven you will repent it.

*Miss B.* I shall speak as I please. *Advocates* may give an opinion, but the decision rests with the judge.

*Rath.* Speak respectfully—I warn you for the last time.

*Miss B.*—(*To* Lew.)—Will you marry my niece, or not?

*Lew.* Never.

*Miss B.* Positively you will not?

*Lew.* Most positively never.

*Miss B.* Then our business is at an end,—(*Curtsies.*)—Your servant, gentlemen. Take my word for it, I'll teach you both to speak respectfully. Ha! Ha! Ha! [*Exit.*

*Lew.* Hell and furies! What means she?

*Rath.* The woman speaks in a tone of dreadful resolution.

*Lew.* Damnation! I'll follow her, and—

*Rath.* Hold! Be cool.

*Lew.* Once more I swear that, as far as I know, I never made a promise of marriage.

*Rath.* I must have time for reflection. We will speak further on the subject soon.

*Lew.* But what will you—

*Rath.* For the present farewel. [*Exit.*

*Enter* FREDERICA.

*Fre.* Have the goodness, Mr. Lewis, to interfere between Miss Bolfeld, and the stranger who is here. Mr. Talland is in his own room, and I fear there will be a dispute.

*Lew.* I go immediately to prevent it. [*Exit.*

*Fre.* I will return to my lowly situation, for discord reigns in this house.

*Enter* TALLAND.

*Tal.* My dear girl, I have been thinking that your abode here is not likely to be pleasant. To-morrow I will take you to my daughter.

*Fre.* Your kindness knows no bounds.

*Enter* ELLOF.

*Ell.*—*(As he enters.)*—Damn the Jezabel! [*Exit* Fre.

*Tal.* Has any thing disagreeable happened to you?

*Ell.* Yes, and to your amiable house-keeper too, for your son, without saying a word, has handed her so gently out of doors, that I believe her limbs will not soon recover the concussion.

*Tal.* Where is she?

*Ell.* Lying in the street, and there let her lie.—Stop, I say—remain here.

*Tal.* What occasioned this commotion?

*Ell.* My pipe. I was smoaking in as peaceable a way as possible, and thinking of my poor farm, when into the room burst the dragon, and poured forth such a torrent of abuse as man never heard.

*Tal.* Ellof—pity me.

*Ell.* I do, but I'll not witness such misery any longer. I shall leave you to-morrow.

*Tal.* No, no, my friend.

*Ell.* Melancholy is infectious, and by degrees converts the firmest man into a mere child. Melancholy kills me. Mirth is my maxim.

*Tal.* Do you abandon me, because I cannot be cheerful?

*Ell.* Not because you cannot, but because you will not. —My good fellow, did I not know your excellent heart, I should think you had a bad conscience.

*Tal.*—*(Suddenly seizes his hand.)*—You must not leave me Ellof—you must not leave me.

*Ell.* Will you be cheerful?

*Tal.* I have a great plan dependant on you.

*Ell.* Will you be cheerful?

*Tal.* Who can teach, and who can learn that art?

*Ell.* I and you. I'll give you an hour's lesson every day, over a bottle of wine. He, who when old, when robbed of all, can wander from his former home, and still support his spirits—he is the proper teacher of cheerfulness—and I am the man. Accept me as your preceptor.

*Tal.* Your intention is good, but—

*Ell.* The lesson is over a bottle of wine.

*Tal.* Alas what can you do with me?

*Ell.* Why I can make you drink with me. But come with me, at present, to your daughter, and think no more of the fallen Jezabel. Should she have the same fate as her predecessor—so much the better.—Come, come. When we return from your daughter, out comes the bottle of wine, and forthwith begin my instructions. You shall have a glass—and if you then behave ill—why, I'll empty the bottle—Agreed! Agreed! Come!—*(Drawing him away.)*

*Tal.* I am without a hat.

*Ell.*—*(Looks at him.)*—True.—*(Throws his own hat aside.)*—There—now we are alike. Come, come.

*Tal.*—*(Resisting.)*—But the people—

*Ell.* Pshaw! Confuse the people—something new, and our point is carried.

*Enter* MISS BOLFELD.

*Miss B.* Stop, I say. That monster—

*Ell.* Huzza! March! Huzza!

*Miss B.* He has behaved in such—

*Ell.* Huzza! Huzza! *Vive la joie! Vive l' allegresse!*
[*Exit leading* Tal.

*Miss B.* That ever I was born to endure such conduct!—Thrown down half a dozen steps into the street!—But their triumph shall be short.—I'll be revenged.

*Enter* BOLFELD.

*Bol.* Well, what have you done? Here have I been exerting myself in every quarter, and not one proceeding do I know on your part that is likely to produce any profit.

*Miss B.* Be at ease. Half of old Soltau's property must be ours—one way or other.

*Bol.* One way or other! Pshaw! Nonsense. You have been talking in that silly way for half a year, and we seem no nearer the mark. I verily believe I shall some night hear you knock at my door after having been kicked out of the house without a farthing.

*Miss. B.* Heaven defend me! Mr. Lewis has made a beginning, for he kicked me out of doors just now.

*Bol.* A pretty way of treating his future aunt!

*Miss B.* His aunt I will be, too. I go on certain grounds.

*Bol.* I advise you to do so. I am not to pay for champagne in order to intoxicate the fellow, and then have no reward. I have made an attack on Rathing, but it did not succeed. What's to be done now?

*Miss B.* Attack the old man.

*Bol.* But if I alarm him too much, he may die without a will.

*Miss B.* Never fear. He has as many lives as a cat.—Attack him I say, and bellow without mercy. Depend upon it that before sun-set I will be at your house with half the fortune—for half I will have. Now go to the old man, and insist on the marriage.

*Bol.* May I be loud?

*Miss B.* The louder the better.

*Bol.* And if he will not consent—

*Miss B.* Then he shall hear *my* thunder, and that will end the matter.

*Bol.* Are you sure of that? For if you should come without money—damnation—

*Miss B.* I tell you again most positively that before evening I will bring you half of old Soltau's fortune.

*Bol.* Well, then, wherever I find old Talland,—it matters not whether in house or street,—I'll bawl till——

*Miss B.* Go, then, and find him. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

# ACT IV.

SCENE.—*A Room in* Talland's *House.*

*Enter* TALLAND *and* ELLOF, *hastily.*

*Tal.*—*(In great agitation and much exhausted.)*—This is too much.—*(Throws himself into a chair.)*

*Ell.* But who is the fellow, that had the impudence to attack you thus in the street?

*Tal.* Bolfeld—my house-keeper's brother.

*Ell.* The scoundrel!

*Tal.* To address me thus!

*Ell.* I wish you would have allowed me to make him feel my stick.

*Tal.* And my son too! What can the madman mean by forming a connection with such a creature?—*(Rises.)*—Go, go, my friend. Leave me. Why waste your life with one, whose sorrows daily increase?

*Ell.* I will assist you, my friend. You are irritable.—Compose yourself and procure me a conversation with your son. All will yet end well.

*Tal.* Alas! How is that possible?

*Ell.* Never despair. He who gives way to melancholy, can never succeed in any thing. Cheer up, and while I am settling matters with your son—talk to your housekeeper. Act as her master. Abolish the ascendency she has gained over you. It matters not how it was acquired—destroyed

it must be.—Delays are dangerous—I'll tell the servant to send her hither. Talland—act like a man. [*Exit.*

*Tal.* He is right.—Yes.—I'll destroy this growing evil.—I'll learn my situation—I'll learn what she knows—what she does not know.——She comes.

*Enter* Miss Bolfeld.

*Miss B.* What are your commands?

*Tal.* Deceitful, ungrateful woman!

*Miss B.* It would be better for you, if you could end with such words instead of beginning with them.

*Tal.* Thou torment of my life!

*Miss B.* How can so indifferent a person be able to torment you?

*Tal.* Because my impolitic kindness—

*Miss B.* If it seems to you more politic—dismiss me.

*Tal.* I do. You shall leave my house to-day.

*Miss B.* With all my heart.

*Tal.* Your wages you shall receive for life.

*Miss B.* I want no wages.

*Tal.* As you please.

*Miss B.* I have other pretensions. If you refuse them—

*Tal.* What pretensions?

*Miss B.* I have my opinion respecting certain transactions.

*Tal.* If you mean to refer to my son's conduct, I positively tell you he shall not marry your niece.

*Miss B.* Then I have done.—(*Going.*)

*Tal.* Hold! you brother and you do not wish this connection to take place. I plainly see that money is your object. You surround me on every side in order that you may extort money from me. If there be any spark of humanity in you, sell me the repose I want. I will purchase repose—

I am old and cannot long enjoy it—therefore do not value it at too high a rate.

*Miss B.* Now you talk rationally.

*Tal.* How much, do you think, will satisfy your brother and provide for you?

*Miss B.* What are you disposed to give?

*Tal.*—*(After a pause.)*—Two thousand dollars.

*Miss B.* That is nothing.

*Tal.* I am obliged to pay my son's debts.

*Miss B.* Soltau left you thirty thousand dollars.

*Tal.*—*(With terrific violence.)*—Damned be—*(Walks up and down, endeavouring to compose himself.)*

*Miss B.* That I believe.

*Tal.* What mean you, then? How far do your diabolical plans extend? How much do you require?

*Miss B.* Half.

*Tal.* Of what?

*Miss B.* Of the thirty thousand.

*Tal.* Begone!—Out of my house!—Begone!

*Miss B.* I will not.—Compose yourself, and listen, for the period is arrived, when it becomes us both to declare our sentiments openly. Every one has an end in view. You had one and obtained it. At that time I formed one too. Had you engaged me in your plan, you might have lived more comfortably. Mine is fixed. If you will let me share your prize with you, I am satisfied—if not, we shall, it is true, neither of us obtain any thing but you have more to lose than myself. I believe you perfectly understand me.

*Tal.* Hear me.—We are both old. I daily grow more infirm. Let us both face death with a good conscience. From the fortune which I possessed before Soltau's death, I have, by rigid economy, saved seven thousand dollars. Of this I can dispose. With two thousand I can pay my son's debts. The same sum will I give to my daughter, and the remaining three thousand to you.

*Miss B.* And who is to have the thirty thousand?

*Tal.* None of us. I have made a vow that it shall devolve to my friend's nearest relation—Frederica Soltau.

*Miss B.* Indeed!—Strange enough!

*Tal.* Take the three thousand dollars and remain with me. Make this act easier to me—for you must feel it is a good act. I will forget what you have done to displease me, and you will cause me to die in peace. Grant what I ask—— I ask but little of you—and yet to me it is much. Can one fellow creature refuse another, when he asks no more?

*Miss B.* Let the girl have the three thousand, and us twelve.—(Tal. *clasps his hands together with violence.)*—Then I shall be satisfied.

*Tal.*—*(After a pause.)*—I have made a vow.

*Miss B.* So have I.

*Tal.* Go, go. I have nothing more to say.

*Miss B.* Are you serious?

*Tal.* I am.

*Miss B.* You will not agree to my proposal?

*Tal.* No.—*(Firmly.)*—No.

*Miss B.*—*(After a pause.)*—Reflect.—(Tal. *beckons to her to go.)*—Shall I go?—(Tal. *turns away.)*—Shall I go? Are you resolved?

*Tal.* God will assist me!

*Miss B.* You may assist yourself.

*Tal.*—*(With coldness and contempt.)*—Go.

*Miss B.*—*(Approaches, and endeavours in vain to catch his eye—then in a furious and determined tone.)*—I *will* go.

[*Exit.*

*Tal.*—*(Walks up and down.)*—Honour!—Alas!—What speaks here—*(Laying his hand on his breast.)*—is more.—For my honour I can now do nothing. What can I do for my conscience?—*(Casts his eyes in gloomy despair on the earth.)*—Thou end of human pain and sorrow, Welcome! Welcome, death.—*(Raises his eyes slowly towards heaven.)*—

Almighty Judge, be merciful, if misery and despair lead me into the arms of my last friend.

*Enter* LEWIS.

*Lew.* Mr. Ellof has spoken to me.

*Tal.* What do you want?

*Lew.* Be at ease with respect to Bolfeld's ridiculous demand.

*Tal.* It is dreadful.

*Lew.* One evening he intoxicated me, and I know not what I said. I am ignorant of any promise, and will swear that I am so.

*Tal.* To-day you will receive the money for your creditors.

*Lew.* With respect to what you mentioned as your wish—

*Tal.* My dear son, I fear my wish was not mentioned till too late. At present I am afflicted by other matters. Leave me.

*Lew.* Oh, there comes my brother-in-law. [*Exit.*

*Enter* RATHING.

*Tal.* What do you want, my son?

*Rath.* Dear sir, your happiness is the sole object of my pursuits. Your sorrow increases every hour. Disclose to me the cause of it.

*Tal.* I acknowledge your good intentions, but—

*Rath.* Some uncommon burden hangs upon your mind. If, from the delicacy of your feelings, you reproach yourself in any degree, do yourself justice—look back upon the list of your good deeds—and find repose.

*Tal.*—(*Takes his hand.*)—In the afternoon I'll come to

you, and converse with you on several subjects. This is not the time, my son.

*Rath.* I cannot bear that you should be seen in a false light.

*Tal.*—(*Sighs.*)—It must be borne.

*Rath.* You know that I have always feared Mr. Wehrman more than respected him. He is not your friend, and I am sorry to say he even speaks against you to your daughter.

*Tal.* At three o'clock I'll be with you. No more, I do beseech you. I must be left alone in order to compose myself. Good morning.—(Tal. *throws himself in a chair* Rath. *bows and exit.*)

*Enter* Ellof.

*Ell.* Friend, be at ease, with respect to your son. If Bolfeld should think proper to appear here again, he shall soon be taught where the door lies, and his gentle sister—

*Tal.* She is resolved to leave me.

*Ell.* Bravo! Then peace will take her place.

*Tal.* Alas, no. I am oppressed by a burden, which cannot be removed.

*Ell.* Where does it lie?

*Tal.*—(*Lays his hand on his heart.*)—Here—here it has lain for years.

*Ell.* Disclose the nature of it.

*Tal.* I cannot.

*Ell.* Look at me stedfastly. Talland, many a person has found consolation by confiding in me. I can comprehend sorrow, endure it, and remove it.—(Tal. *throws himself into his arms.*)—Right, my friend.

*Tal.*—(*Gazes at him.*)—Ellof, when you have cast a look

into the horrible abyss—you will start back, and leave me for ever.

*Ell.*—(*With firmness.*)—I will not.—If you have ever forgotten yourself for a moment—

*Tal.* I have—I have—and this moment has been followed by years of misery—yet still—still does my burden become heavier.

*Ell.* Then bear it not alone—let me share it or remove it. Were your house on fire, would you shut the door against your neighbour, who offers his assistance?

*Tal.* No. You shall know my secret. It is better to sink in the opinion of my friend, than of my children.

*Ell.* I can be silent, and may heaven rob me of my cheerful disposition if I be not!

*Tal.* On that condition I begin. Old Soltau was my bosom-friend. He hated his relations, for they behaved infamously to him. Several years previous to his death, he bequeathed his whole fortune to me. This he afterwards repented, and three days before his death he made a second will. He placed—oh look more mildly at me—he placed so much confidence in me that he employed me as his notary to prepare the will, and after signing it, deposited it in my hands.—(*Strikes his breast.*)—One moment!—(*Leans on* Ell.)

*Ell.* Cheer up, my friend. I know mankind.

*Tal.* Oh God, God!——By this second will he left his whole fortune to his relations, except a legacy to me. I never was covetous, but had rejoiced at the prospect of this fortune, from sincere affection to my children. For years I had been accustomed to consider it my own. The idea that my children would lose it was insufferable.—Parental affection misled me——I—(*Covers his face.*)—I cannot proceed.

*Ell.* You concealed the second will.

*Tal.* And produced the first.

*Ell.* And thus became possessed of the property. I have heard the nature of your crime, and your present looks sufficiently proclaim your painful penitence.

*Tal.* In motion, or on my pillow, the image of my dying friend appears before me. Every shadow which I see, every voice which I hear, calls on me for retribution. My conscience accuses me, my eyes betray me, and every one who looks keenly at me seems to condemn me. My punishment is every day new—every day more dreadful.—God have mercy on me—I can no more—

*Ell.* Unhappy man, retain no longer the cause of your torments.

*Tal.* Soltau's relations traduced my character.—Shame would not allow me to give up the whole fortune, and they refused to accept a part.—Never have I used any part of it, and at my death it shall devolve to the lawful heiress.

*Ell.* Right, my friend! All will, then, be properly settled. Your penitence will be complete.

*Tal.* This Miss Bolfeld was Soltau's house-keeper. She may, perhaps, suspect that a second will was made—nay, she may even know it. For this reason I took the monster into my family. She long conceived that my evil conscience would induce me to marry her, but finding this a fruitless hope, she began to tyrannize over me by oblique allusions to my guilt. I have been in a continued state of alarming uncertainty, but this uncertainty she has to-day removed by expressly demanding half of Soltau's property,—or—

*Ell.* Or what?

*Tal.* She did not complete her threat, but a perfect knowledge of her character makes me sure she will proceed to the utmost.

*Ell.* Unfortunate friend!

*Tal.* I am lost. I would not repine at that, but my children—my children!

*Ell.* Is she covetous?

*Tal.* Very covetous—and her brother still more so

*Ell.* You are, at all events, resolved that the lawful heiress shall have the fortune.

*Tal.* Most positively.

*Ell.* Then you need not any longer torment yourself. Of course you have destroyed the second will.

*Tal.* No. It is still in my possession.

*Ell.* Away with it!

*Tal.* Often have I had it in my hands with the intention of burning it, but—I saw the signature of my late friend—I felt his unsuspecting confidence in me—I remembered that he died in my arms—I shuddered at the idea of what I had done, and fancied that by destroying the will I was, a second time, committing the crime. The will fell from my hands, and with tears of agony I knelt near it and prayed.—It is still in my possession.

*Ell.* It must be destroyed—this very day. Allow me a quarter of an hour's reflection, that I may determine how we should act towards this house-keeper.

*Tal.* You despise me.

*Ell.* Talland, the tempter has thrown you down, but you have valiantly fought against him till you have placed your foot upon his neck.—

*Tal.* I am prepared for all that may occur, and strive not against the decision of just Fate. But my children, my children! That I, who erred through sincere affection for them—that I should brand them with infamy—

*Ell.* Fear not that. You are not lost. Exert yourself, and follow my directions.

*Tal.* Nothing can now retrieve me. Oh conscience, con-

science, thou robbest the soul of every faculty, and consumest the very marrow in our bones. [*Exit led by* Ell.

*Enter* MISS BOLFELD *from the opposite side.*

*Miss B.* So, Mr. Talland!—The lawful heiress is to have the property! Then have I lost all chance. No.—After ten years expectation, I will not.

*Enter* WEHRMAN.

*Weh.* Is Mr. Lewis at home?

*Miss B.* I don't know.

*Weh.* It is well that I find you here. Mark me. If your brother dares to utter another syllable relative to the marriage with his daughter, I'll talk to the fellow in a way he will not like.

*Miss B.*—*(In a tone of defiance.)*—Let me tell you, sir, we are not so easily alarmed.

*Weh.* Indeed!—Then I may perhaps begin with you.

*Miss B.*—*(Astonished.)*—Me!

*Weh.* You were in Soltau's house, and attended him during his last illness. You will be very seriously interrogated as to what you know;—but if you will place confidence in me, you may find it to your advantage.

*Miss B.* I shall not listen to any such proposal, mighty sir.

*Weh.* As you like. I don't want your assistance. When the flame mounts, you probably will feel that it burns. Where is the new boarder?

*Miss B.* Boarder!

*Weh.* Yes—who, from well-calculated economical compassion has been taken into the House.

*Miss B.* You mean Miss Soltau, then?

*Weh.* I do, and mean that she may become very rich if instructed how to act. [*Exit.*

*Miss B.* Mercy on me!—The whole face of circumstances has undergone a change. Must I, then, lose every thing?—*(A pause.)*—Every thing!——No.—No.—I'll lose nothing. One person still remains, through whom I am certain to succeed. Henry!

*Enter* HENRY.

Beg Miss Soltau to come hither.—(*Exit* Hen.)—You, Mr. Ellof, may reflect, and you, Mr. Wehrman, may commence a law-suit. I'll outwit you both. You shall soon see whether your wisdom or my cunning is most effective.

*Enter* FREDERICA.

*Fre.* What can you want with me?

*Miss B.* I want to strike a bargain with you. Heaven has appointed me to be the means of bestowing happiness upon you.

*Fre.* How am I to understand this?

*Miss B.* Come with me to my chamber that we may not be interrupted. Heaven provides most miraculously for you.

*Fre.* Through you?

*Miss B.* Through me. Be grateful to God, and reward his agent, that I may pass reputably through life. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter* TALLAND *and* ELLOF.

*Tal.* There she goes.—(*He has a pistol in his hand, and attempts to follow her.*)—All is lost.

*Ell.* Hold! She is not alone.—(*Looks through the door.*)—She goes down the gallery—and enters a chamber.

*Tal.* God of heaven!—let me pass.

*Ell.* Hold, I say. Is your servant honest?

*Tal.* I dare be sworn he is.

*Ell.* Talk to him with composure—tell him some accounts are missing—but with composure, I say, or all is lost. Go. I'll wait here till you return.

*Tal.* She has the will.—(*Wipes his forehead.*)—The agonies of death are on me.

*Ell.* Talland, on your instant composure depends *every thing.*—(*Exit* Tal.)—I never was in such a situation. Assist me invention, that I may save my friend.—No.—My mind is dark and clouded.—(*Suddenly.*)—How if I——No.—I must not do any thing. He must act. Surprise may gain the point—it is too late to compromise.—It must be so.—By this method we shall be rid of the brother.—But if she—that matters not. There is no other resource.

*Re-enter* TALLAND.

*Tal.*—(*Rushes with open arms towards* Ell.)—She has it.

*Ell.* Are you certain?

*Tal.* She has locked herself more than once in my study.

*Ell.* Summon your resolution. Seek her—speak to her—seize her—and place the pistol to her breast. She is not accustomed to resolution from you. Terror may effect much.

*Tal.* And if she declares she has taken no paper, how dare I make a reference to the will?

*Ell.* She was locked in your study, and this justifies search. While you are speaking to her, Henry and I will open her chests and make strict examination.

*Tal.* And if the will be in her brother's hands—

*Ell.* Then we have no resourse, but bribery. The Bolfeld's must have half—Miss Soltau half.—Come! No more delay. Henry shall lead me to her room.—I see her coming.

*Enter* Miss Bolfeld *and* Frederica *from one side* — Weurman *from the other.*

*Weh.* Where is Miss Soltau, Mr. Talland?

*Tal.* This is Miss Soltau.—(Fre. *curtsies.*)

*Weh.* She lives here at present I am told.

*Tal.* She does.

*Weh.* Madam, I feel a sincere interest in your uncommon fate.

*Tal.* This, Miss Soltau, is Mr. Wehrman.

*Weh.* Be so good as to inform me, sir, what this lady's fortune is.

*Fre.* Sir, I have no fortune.

*Weh.* As far as you know.

*Tal.* Have you any further knowledge?

*Weh.* Perhaps I have. I have to communicate some very agreeable prospects to the lady, and shall be happy if she will, for that purpose, accompany me to my sister.

*Tal.* Do you accept this invitation, Miss Soltau?

*Fre.*—(*To* Weh.)—I am grateful for your kindness, sir, but no good fortune can happen to me, which I should not be more pleased to hear in the presence of my benefactor than in any other place.

*Weh.* As you please.—(*To* Tal.)—At present, therefore, you and I share the good intentions towards this lady. How happy would it make us, if you and I could discover that she is entitled to a fortune!—(*To* Fre.)—I have therefore only to warn you against any agreement or compromise. You shall soon know what are your pretensions.—

[*Bows and Exit.*

*Tal.*—(*To* Fre.)—Leave us a while, my good girl.—(*Exit* Fre.—Miss B. *is following her.*)—A word with you.

*Miss B.* I must speak to Miss Soltau.

*Tal.*—(*Resolutely.*)—You shall not.

*Miss B.* What do you want?

*Tal.*—(*Locking the door.*)—Confess.

*Miss B.* What?

*Tal.* You have been in my study.

*Miss B.* Sir—

*Tal.* You have opened my desk.

*Miss B.* Shall I speak in another tone?

*Tal.* It is in vain. Your last hour is come, if you do not confess.

*Miss B.* If you have a bad conscience, that is not my case.

*Tal.*—(*Holds the pistol to her breast.*)—The papers!

*Miss B.*—(*Alarmed beyond all measure.*)—Merciful God!

*Tal.* May he be merciful to me for having deprived thee of life—if thou dost not confess.

*Miss B.* Help!

*Tal.* Utter another word, and it shall be thy last. This murder would be pardonable, compared with all the misery and infamy, which for years thy malice has heaped upon me. Not all my patience, not all my kindness and generosity, not all the sums which I withheld from my children and lavished upon thee, could ever make thee so humane as to grant me one moment's comfort.—Now expect no compassion—no mercy.—Vengeance, vengeance for all the torments thou hast inflicted upon me!—Hast thou stolen the papers?—Confess, or this moment thou diest.

*Miss B.* Mercy! Mercy!—I did take a paper.

*Tal.* This instant restore it.

*Miss B.* Oh Heavens! I no longer have it.

*Tal.*—(*Cocks the pistol.*)—Who has it?

*Miss B.* Miss Soltau.

*Tal.* How long has she had it?

*Miss B.* Only a few minutes.—(*A knock is heard at the*

*door.)*—When I found that you would dismiss me without any reward—(*The knock is repeated.*)

*Tal.* Not another syllable! You are my prisoner,

*Bol.*—(*Without.*)—Is nobody here?

*Miss B.* Yes, brother, yes.

*Tal.*—(*To* Miss B.)—Go into the next room, instantly.

*Miss B.* Burst the door open. Help! Help!—(Tal. *puts the pistol in his pocket and opens the door.)*

*Enter* BOLFELD.

*Bol.* What has happened here?

*Miss B.* He held a pistol to my breast.

*Bol.* Damnation! I'll go to a magistrate.

*Miss B.* Take me with you, brother.

*Tal.* She shall not move from the spot.

*Bol.* But I say she shall go with me, and he who attempts to detain her—

*Tal.*—(*In a tone of stupefaction and despair.*)—True. She may go, and act as she pleases. I am tired of interfering with her conduct.

*Miss B.* Now we shall see whose life is in danger. Yours I rather think, sir. [*Exeunt* Bol. *and* Miss B.

*Enter* ELLOF, *from the other side.*

*Ell.* Whither is she going?

*Tal.* She is gone to publish my infamy. All is inevitably lost. Miss Soltau is already in possession of the will.

*Ell.* But don't let this woman go.—(*Going.*)

*Tal.*—(*Detains him.*)—Leave every thing to heaven.—My hour is come.—(*Draws the pistol hastily from his pocket, and attempts to shoot himself.*)

*Ell.*—(*Seizes his arm.*)—Man!

*Tal.* Release me—I can endure no more—Cruel man, et

me put an end to my sufferings.—(*Endeavours to release himself.*)—Despair is stronger than friendship.

*Ell.* Help! Henry! Henry!

*Enter on one side,* HENRY, *and on the other* Mr. *and* Mrs. RATHING.

*Hen.* For Heaven's sake.—(*Seizes* Tal's. *right arm, and wrests the pistol from his hand.*)—Dear, worthy sir—

*Rath.* What has happened?

*Mrs. R.* Dear father!

*Tal.* Oh that you had a father!—Go, Maria. You are a poor forsaken orphan.

*Mrs. R.* Say not so, dearest father.

*Tal.* Mention not that name—and look not thus at me. There is peace and virtue in your looks—I cannot bear them.

*Ell.* Compose yourself, friend. Go, Henry. [*Exit* Hen.

*Tal.* You cannot now assist me. Farewel, Maria—embrace me.—(*Presses her in his arms, then pushes her gently from him.*)—And now forget me—forget me, all of you.

*Mrs. R.* Oh may God forget me, if I do not love you with the same affection that I always felt for you!

*Tal.* That was not sufficient for me. I regarded not the costly blessing, and have brought infamy upon my children. Forgive me, Maria. You are poor—you are deprived of wealth and reputation—I have plundered you.—(*Takes her hand.*)—Forgive me.

*Mrs. R.* Oh that I could allay the tempest, which rages in this breast!—(*Lays her hand on his heart.*)

*Tal.* That you cannot.—No one can—no one shall.—The form—the dying man—his breaking eye——Do not look at me, Maria—thus he looked at me—thus my hand lay on his breast—(*Puts* Mrs. R's. *hand aside.*)—When I

pledged to him——Away! Away!—His lips are close!—but every figure which I see proclaims his dying will.

*Rath.* I conjure you by all that is dear to you—

*Tal.* Here it is hidden—(*Beating his breast.*)—here—here—deep below his will is hidden—it has been hidden fourteen years—air—air—air—my heart will break—give me air.

*Mrs. R.* Father! Father!

*Rath.* For Heaven's sake—

*Ell.* Rouse yourself.

*Tal.* The angel of the Almighty has opened the tribunal.—The world is summoned—I am condemned—my children declared infamous—through *me.*—Curse me not.—Grant me—(*Sinks on his knees before his daughter.*)—grant me thy pity—I beseech thee—(*Falls back in a swoon. They catch him in their arms.*)

END OF ACT IV.

# ACT V.

SCENE.—*The same.* *Enter* LEWIS *and* WEHRMAN.

*Weh.* What means this sudden alteration in the house? No one is to be seen.

*Lew.* I cannot understand it.

*Weh.* Indeed. But I can—and have long understood it.—Who could have thought that a man with so bad a conscience would be the first to place others in a disgraceful light? But for your father's conduct, I should now have been at the top of preferment. For years I have used every possible effort that I might be able to gain public satisfaction for the public disgrace he brought upon me. The wished-for moment is arrived, and I will not let it pass without availing myself of it.

*Lew.* Is this your friendship? Would you try to ruin the father of your friend?

*Weh.* He is my enemy, and I am only doing an act of justice. Soltau's fortune must be transferred to the lawful heiress. It is evident that the will by which your father obtained it, was a false one.

*Lew.* Dare you attempt—

*Weh.* I every moment perceive more palpably that the attempt is not daring. As for you—of course there is an end to the connexion between you and my sister; but I will, nevertheless, assist you in your pursuits.

*Lew.* And if the worst were true, how will you act towards my father?

*Weh.* The only means of persuading me not to make his crime public, will be to confess to me that he is as guilty as he wished to make me appear in the eyes of the world—but he must throw himself entirely upon my mercy.

*Lew.* You are a monster. I despise myself for listening to you.

*Weh.* You feel as a son ought to feel, but remember your father's situation makes it necessary that you should beware of using illiberal language to me.

*Lew.* My father cannot be what you describe.

*Weh.* Come with me to your room, and I will communicate the proofs to you.—But, however, you are young, and may, perhaps, gain the affections of this Miss Soltau, by which you will become possessed of the whole fortune, and can support your relations.

*Lew.* Spare your humiliating counsel, and have compassion on my father.

*Weh.* I have observed his conduct with a watchful eye so long, that I sink under the foolish weakness of feeling pity for him. I promise to conceal his error from the world, but only on condition of being allowed to convince him that it is in my power to retaliate upon him.

*Lew.* The son must be silent, but at least avoid the family for the present, and let me speak to you as a friend.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter* MR. *and* MRS. RATHING *and* ELLOP.

*Mrs. R.* Alas, I have no hope. My father is lost to the world and us.

*Rath.* Compose yourself, Maria.

*Ell.* I must own the attack is severe, but this might naturally be expected. That a secret, on which his character

depends, should be brought to light after having been concealed in his own breast for so many years,—that his sincere repentance may not be so well known as his crime—all this must affect him deeply. But, thank Heaven, the storm is over. He must now seek repose elsewhere.

*Rath.* Undoubtedly. He must see the inhabitants of this place as little as possible.

*Ell.* He must prevail upon himself to appear once more among them—and then away! I will accompany him.

*Mrs. R.* But what is to be done here? Miss Soltau has the will.

*Ell.* Perhaps it is not yet opened.

*Mrs. R.* And the Bolfelds! What—

*Ell.* With them nothing but money will avail. Go, my dear sir, and send Bolfeld to me.

*Rath.* Offer what you please. We wish for no parental inheritance if a father's peace can be purchased with it.

*Mrs. R.* Dearest William! [*Embraces him.*

*Ell.* Right!—Lewis must undertake to silence Wehrman—I'll direct this.—But that he may not form a combination with Bolfeld, send the avaricious bully hither instantly.—You, Madam, must attend to your father—but at present let him sleep. I will have an immediate conversation with Miss Soltau, after which I shall be ready for Bolfeld.

*Mrs. R.* Heaven reward you, sir, for the interest you feel—

*Ell.* Not another word—and not another tear! For the crime which has been committed torrents of tears have already been shed,—(*Takes their hands.*)—Courage, my friends! All may yet end well. Go, go.—(*Exeunt* Mr. *and* Mrs. R.)—Wehrman! Wehrman!—Alas! There hangs the cloud which threatens to destroy my plans.

*Enter* LEWIS, *much agitated.*

*Lew.* Where is my father?

*Ell.* In his room, but how long he will remain there—or can remain there, I know not.

*Lew.* God of Heaven!

*Ell.* What will you do for him?

*Lew.* Every thing that man can do.—Who will advise me—

*Ell.* I will.

*Lew.* Is it true then that the will—

*Ell.* It is true.

*Lew.* That my father's honour—

*Ell.* Young man, I admire your feeling, but recollect that he, who exposed himself to danger for your sake, ought not to be deprived of honour in your eyes.

*Lew.* Can you imagine I condemn him?

*Ell.—(Takes his hand.)*—Henceforth I shall not imagine you capable of it.—As for honour, if you chuse to gain it by filial exertion, I'll be your instructor.

*Lew.* I am astonished that a stranger—

*Ell.* Congenial minds are not strangers to each other.

*Lew.* Oh speak then. What must be done?

*Ell.—(Lays his hand on* Lewis's *breast.)*—This must tell you.

*Lew.—(Resolutely.)*—Frederica shall have the fortune.

*Ell.* Right!

*Lew.* But I fear it will be difficult to silence Wehrman.

*Ell.* That you must attempt. Your father's distress urges this implacable man to prove his suspicions by force; and such conduct has as great, perhaps a greater effect on a suffering penitent than absolute proof would have upon a hardened villain.

*Lew.* He will conceal the circumstance from the world, if my father will confess all to him in private.

*Ell.* Such a demand will kill your father.

*Lew.* All petitions are in vain.

*Ell.* Then only one expedient remains. The laws forbid it, but filial affection, roused to the utmost by despair, justifies it.

*Lew.* I understand you, and my sensations anticipated your sentiments; but the fear of doing any thing which might draw the attention of the public to my father, deterred me. Now, however, when you urge it—*(Going.)*

*Ell.* Yet hold!—You are right.—Another way is still open to us. Falshood must aid where truth cannot prevail. Be ready to maintain every thing I propose—every thing I say of you.

*Lew.* I do not comprehend you.

*Ell.* Time is precious. Send Wehrman to me.

*Lew.* I place my father's fate in your hands.

*Ell.* Some one comes.—Send Wehrman hither.

[*Exit* Lew.

*Enter* FREDERICA.

Miss Soltau, I am a friend of this family. At my age, a man may be supposed to have obtained some knowledge of the world. I wish for your confidence, and time will not permit me to say more than that you shall find me worthy of it.

*Fre.* After having witnessed your conduct, sir, since I came to this house, I willingly grant it—nay, came hither to ask your advice.

*Ell.* That you shall have. Providence has placed you in a critical situation. You have received a paper. Was it open, when you received it?

*Fre.* It was.

*Ell.* Have you read it?

*Fre.* I have.

*Ell.* And how mean you to act?

*Fre.* In such a manner as to injure no one. Oh, instruct my inexperienced youth, and tell me how I can be of any service to Mr. Talland.

*Ell.* I perceive you are worthy of the fortune, which must fall to you. But hear me. As God shall judge me, Talland had determined that you should have it before he took you into his house.

*Fre.* Oh, I willingly believe it. Your word, and the kindness with which he sought me, are sufficient proofs. I am still more indebted to him than I thought. His children shall not be deprived of all.

*Ell.* Good girl!—Bolfeld may, I think, be bribed, but the suspicions of Wehrman—

*Enter* Lewis.

*Lew.* Mr. Ellof, my father wants you.

*Ell.* Will you consent to appear ignorant of all that has happened, and to accept the whole fortune as a present from Talland?

*Fre.* I will.—

*Ell.* We must lose no time. May I rely on this?

*Fre.*—*(Presents her hand to him.)*—Most firmly.

*Ell.* God reward you, and when a young man, worthy of you, shall obtain this hand, the recollection of your present conduct must make you completely happy. God bless you! [*Exit.*

*Fre.*—*(To Lew. who is going.)*—Mr. Lewis!

*Lew.* Madam!

*Fre.* When I last saw you, I begged that our conversation might end. I now intreat your patience.

*Lew.* You need but command.

*Fre.* Pardon me, if I avail myself of this opportunity to speak on the subject with which your mind must at present be wholly concerned. Your father is justified in my eyes and in the eyes of Heaven, for his contrition has been sincere: willingly, therefore, will I lend my aid to justify him in the eyes of the world. Repeat this to your sister and brother-in-law, to whom I would be happy to say it if I did not wish to make you the messenger of good tidings, who have so often gone to them for a far different purpose.

*Lew.* You surprise me—

*Fre.* Hear further. My uncle did not forget his friend, entirely—nor shall I forget him. Be assured that Mr. Talland may be at ease with respect to his children.

*Lew.* Can you, by humiliating generosity—

*Fre.* Your father is just—you are just—allow me to be so too.—I shall rejoice to see you more happy and composed. [*Exit.*

*Lew.* My admiration of her sense and virtue increases each time that I converse with her, but it is, thank Heaven, admiration unmingled with interested motives.

*Enter* BOLFELD.

*Bol.* Pshaw! Never tell me—

*Lew.* What do you want, sir?

*Bol.* Not you for a son in-law, Mr. Light-purse.

*Lew.* Scoundrel, I'll kick you out of doors.

*Bol.* But not till you have paid me—and paid me handsomely too. Oh that I had known this story of the will sooner! You should have offered me a round sum on your knees.

*Lew.* If you have any regard for your bones—

*Bol.* You ought to thank me for only bawling within doors, for if I were to proclaim what I know in the st , every window of the house would be broken in a trice.

*Enter* RATHING.

*Rath.* Be quiet, I beseech you, and have compassion on the old man.

*Bol.* What! Have compassion on a man, who held a pistol to my sister's breast!—At a word—eight thousand dollars I'll have—or the devil himself shall be let loose.

*Rath.* But Miss Soltau will obtain the fortune.

*Bol.* That's your concern—not mine. The money I will have, and if my sister had not been a great fool, we should have had a great deal more long ago.

*Rath.* I have already made the utmost offer.

*Bol.* What! a few paltry dollars, forsooth! Will you, or will you not, give me eight thousand?

*Rath.* I will not.

*Bol.* Then abide by the consequence.—*(Going.)*

*Enter* ELLOF.

*Ell.*—*(Detains* Bol.)—Holla, townsman!

*Bol.* Townsman! Who are you?

*Ell.* One, who proceeds with vigour, when he discovers villanous intentions. I know Mr. Bolfeld well. Submit, or dread me.

*Bol.* Damnation! What do you mean?

*Ell.* You shall have a thousand dollars, on condition that you and your sister sign an article, declaring it to be your joint opinion that no second will was ever made. Instantly

consent, or the nefarious traffic in smuggled goods, between you and Reefeld, shall be brought to light, and Mr. Bolfeld's dismissal must of course ensue. Answer.

*Bol.* Smuggled!—Does a run-away fellow presume to accuse me—

*Ell.*—*(Seizes him by the collar.)*—Scoundrel!—

*Bol.* Mercy on me—for Heaven's sake.

*Ell.* You have robbed the government of its revenue, and that part of its revenue, which you are appointed to receive.

*Bol.* Pray, sir, can you produce any proofs of this?

*Ell.* I can, villain. The waggoners employed by you are ready to testify it.

*Bol.*—*(Aside.)*—Damnation!

*Ell.* Now consent instantly, or I will proceed to establish your guilt.

*Bol.* Mercy on me!—I must first consult my poor sister, and if she has no objection—

*Ell.* Begone, then. A thousand dollars—and no more. Begone, I say.

*Bol.* I always told the blockhead to bring the affair to a conclusion. Now, we must be satisfied with a paltry thousand.—The stupid old fool! [*Exit.*

*Ell.* That fellow is secured. Reefeld and I lived in the same village, and I was lately apprized of the connexion between him and Bolfeld. I was resolved to expose their villany, but rejoice I have so good a reason for concealing it. We must now disarm Wehrman. Go to your father, Mr. Lewis—receive the money designed for the payment of your debts, and take leave of him.

*Lew.* I will not forsake my father.

*Rath.* Leave!

*Ell.* The carriage is ordered. He must quit this place for a short time.—I own I wish your wife could accompany him.

*Rath.* She can and will.

*Ell.* Some one else must accompany him too, if all be as I wish.

*Lew.* I repeat that I will not forsake him.

*Ell.* If you will not confirm his melancholy by letting him perceive your own, I can have no objection. Remember you must support me in every thing. Wehrman will come, I presume?

*Lew.* Very soon.

*Ell.* Go then—summon your spirits, and return with a cheerful countenance.

*Lew.* As cheerful as it can be. [*Exit.*

*Ell.* Now to business again.—Wehrman can make no complaint respecting a concealed will, if the heiress deny its existence. We must confuse him by a bold stroke.—(*Espies* Fre.)—It is well you come.

*Enter* FREDERICA.

*Fre.* It cannot be pleasant to any one that I should any longer remain in this house.—(*Presents a paper to* Ell.)—Here is my grateful acknowledgment of Mr. Talland's bounty.

*Ell.* Generous girl! Will you rescue the good man entirely? It is in your power.

*Fre.* Most willingly.

*Ell.* Will you, to effect this, undertake—what I dare scarcely ask?

*Fre.* Any thing compatible with my honour.

*Ell.* His melancholy situation—makes me venture any request, by which my friend can be rescued.—My dear girl, consent for a short time to acknowledge yourself engaged to Lewis. The most solemn article shall be given to you, declaring you are free. Confess that you are engaged to

him in the presence of Wehrman, and leave this place with us. At the expiration of a few weeks, it may be said that not finding him the man, with whom you can be happy, you have declined his addresses, and that his father, incensed at his conduct, has restored to you the property of your uncle. Thus, for a short time we shall silence the world, and all will, meanwhile, be properly adjusted. Do you feel yourself capable of doing so much to save my unhappy friend?

*Fre.*—*(After a pause.)*—As far as I can at present judge—it will not be easy to me.

*Rath.* That I feel.

*Fre.* But if you both think that it will produce such happy consequences—

*Rath.* It will; it will.

*Fre.* I will consent to it, then, on the conditions you have mentioned.

*Rath.*—*(Kisses her hand.)*—I admire—revere you.

*Ell.* The deed by which you are acknowledged to be at liberty, you shall receive from me. Now, Wehrman is completely disarmed. Go, dear generous girl. We expect him every moment.—*(Exit* Fre.)—When he comes, we must, as if by accident, make some allusion to the pretended connexion between the young people.

*Enter* TALLAND, LEWIS, *and* MRS. RATHING.

Come, my friend—hold up your head. All goes on as we wish.—(Tal. *looks at him.)*

*Rath.* You may be at ease now, dear sir.—(Tal. *sighs.)*

*Lew.* I accompany you on the journey—don't I, my father?

*Tal.* Journey!—*(Reflects awhile.)*—Yes—I must begin the journey—

*Ell.* Right, my good friend.

*Tal.*—(*Takes his daughter's hand.*)—Do you hear?

*Mrs. R.* We are all of one opinion in that respect, dear father.

*Ell.* Miss Soltau consents to the declaration that she is engaged to Mr. Lewis.

*Lew.* To me!

*Ell.* Not another word. Obey, that you may prove your filial affection—but remember this is only a pretended engagement—

*Lew.* You need not remind me of that.

*Ell.* So much the better. All, then, is settled. You must now, my friend, lend us some little assistance by appearing cheerful as we pass through the streets, after which we will allow you a tear, if you feel yourself thereby relieved.

*Tal.*—(*Smiles.*)—I have shed many tears—and I remember they relieved me.——but how to appear cheerful——I know not.—(*Looks round.*)—I feel as if I was many years older—(*Sighs.*)—I am so weary—

*Mrs. R.*—(*Apart to* Ell.)—Heavens! What means this?

*Ell.*—(*With composure.*)—I am sorry for it.

*Tal.* Give me a chair—I cannot bear my sorrows and my body.—(*Seats himself.*)—The burden is too great—too great.

*Ell.* You will soon be better, my good friend.—(*Talo shakes his head, and smiles.*)—You will, indeed.

*Tal.* Not here—not here.—Maria, come hither—seat yourself close to me—close to my heart.

*Mrs. R.*—(*Takes a chair.*)—Dearest father!

*Tal.* I thought I had something more to say to you.—Perhaps, it would have been better, if I had not seen you—for the sight of you distresses me.

*Lew.*—(*Kneeling before him.*)—My father!

*Tal.* Maria, your hand!—You were always good. Your hand too, Lewis.—It trembles, my son.—I wanted to tell you that I love you—and you too, Rathing. This is old—but it is true.

*Ell.* You must not give way to this despondency, friend.

*Mrs. R.* Oh, cease, or you will break my heart.

*Tal.* I will no longer distress any one.—(*Clasps his hands, and looks round.*)—Oh!—(*Strikes his breast.*)—Open a window.—(Lew. *obeys.*)—I am so hot—so oppressed—and—(*Beckons to* Ell. *who approaches—and to whom he whispers.*)—Don't let them all flit before me thus.

*Ell.* I'll prevent it.—(*Shakes his head, turns away, and wipes his eyes.*)

*Tal.* Must it be so?—Well, well—it is late—and I must go to the chancellor.—(*Rises.*)

*Mrs. R.* Compose yourself, dear father.—(*Causes him to sit down again.*)—Compose yourself.

*Tal.* Is not that Mr. Wehrman?

*Rath.* He is not here, sir.

*Tal.* Indeed!—(*Sighs.*)—Wehrman is the cause of my being obliged to go away.—(*A pause.*)—I was thinking that as I must go away, and we are now together, I might give you some good advice—for who knows when we shall meet again?

*Lew.* Your will shall be our law.

*Tal.* Much will be said against me now, and after my death—but you must not attend to it. You, Maria, must not weep when you hear my honour called in question—and you, my sons, must not be violent, as good sons might be on such an occasion. Call to mind that you are good children, but that I—was not a good father.

*Ell.* For Heaven's sake, cease, I beseech you.

*Tal.*—(*Wipes his eyes.*)—Now I have been obliged to weep.—Yes.—I must go—I must leave my family, my na-

tive land, and the tomb which contains your mother, and which I wished to have contained me too.—(*Gazes at all with folded hands.*)—Old and infirm as I am, I must fly and avoid the sight of every honest man.

*Ell.*—(*much agitated.*)—Cease, I say. I command—I insist upon it.

*Tal.*—(*Seems somewhat alarmed, looks at* Ell. *and then says with composure*)—Yes—I obey—I'll do any thing you wish. I have no will—I may not have a will.—(*In a friendly tone to* Ell.)—Shall I go?

*Ell.* Yes—your son and daughter will accompany you on the journey.

*Lew. and Mrs. R.* Yes, dear father.

*Tal.* Don't deceive me, for were I to leave my home without you, it would break my heart.

*Lew. and Mrs. R.* We will accompany you, indeed.

*Tal.* Well—take my blessing for your filial affection. I may be allowed to bless you—for the greatest criminal is allowed before his execution—

*Mrs. R.*—(*Kneels.*)—I receive with gratitude the blessing of the best and most unfortunate of fathers.

*Lew.*—(*Kneels.*)—The blessing of Heaven.

*Tal.* Never become rich—never—never—for I can tell you in confidence—(*Draws his children to him.* Rath. *unperceived by his wife takes the hand of* Ell. *and points with a look of anguish to his forehead.*)

*Ell.* Oh God!

*Mrs. R.*—(*Turns away and throws herself into the arms of her husband.*)—He is lost.

*Tal.*—(*Seems to be seeking something in his breast.*)—See—here—there—(*Puts his hand to his head*)—and there—how painful!

*Lew.* What thus distresses you?

*Tal.* Conscience, conscience. Oh, I am hot—dreadfully hot—and you—you are all in tears. Right! I have rob d

you of every thing—but forgive me—for although I make you unhappy, I am so too—and I am still your father.

[*Throws himself into the arms of his son.*

*Enter* WEHRMAN.

*Weh.* I hear strange news, indeed.

*Ell.* Come, madam. We will conduct your father to his room.

*Tal.*—(*Rivets his eyes on* Weh.)—There he is. I am ready.—(*To the rest.*)—Farewel!

*Weh.* Are you not well?

*Tal.*—(*Releases himself.*)—I am extremely well.—(*Presses* Wehrman's *hand.*)—I sincerely thank you for having relieved me.—(*Gives his keys to* Rath.)—There!—(*Kisses his daughter, and embraces his son and friend.*)—Yes—I am released. Celebrate my release without a curse.

*Lew.*—(*To* Weh.)—Oh leave us.

*Tal.* Peace! Listen to me.

*Ell.* You are too weak—

*Tal.* Mr. Wehrman, you are my friend. I may entrust it to you.

*Ell.*—(*To* Weh.)—Sir, you see his situation.—(*Seizes* Tal. *by the arm.*)—Come to your room.

*Tal.* No—no—I must first make peace—I will honourably restore all—

*Rath.* He has made his daughter-in-law a present of the Soltau estate—(*Leading him away.*)

*Tal.* See—they want to drag me away. Help!—(*They quit their hold.*)—

*Weh.* Compose yourself, Mr. Talland.

*Tal.*—(*Goes towards* Weh.)—The will was false—totally false.—(Mrs. R. *almost faints* Rath. *supports her.*)

*Lew.* You see his situation, Mr. Wehrman.

*Weh.* I go.

*Tal.* No. Stay. All is well. I feel better than I was

—I feel easier—more cheerful.——Ha! What are those men bearing?—See—there—see—how kindly he looks at me.—Don't you see him—old Soltau?—There, to the right —there he lies—Silence! Silence!—His eyes are closed. He is asleep.—I'll wake him.—*(Totters towards a chair.—* Lew. *supports him.)*

*Mrs. R.* Oh my father, my father!

*Ell.* His senses are fled.

*Lew.* There is your victory.

*Weh.*—*(Agitated.)*—Oh I wished not for such a victory.

*Tal.*—*(Kneels before the chair.)*—Awake! Awake!—I have restored all—I have no more.—Pursue me no longer—awake and forgive me—awake!—Ha!—He opens his eyes —he offers me his hand—he draws me to him.—*(With a cry of horror.)*—Oh! How cold you are!—*(Becomes very weak.)*—So cold—so cold—oh!—*(His breath begins to fail —he contends against the oppression and attempts to rise.)*— Let me—*(They support him.)*—Let me——

*Weh.*—*(To* Ell.)—I will maintain that I have seen and heard nothing.—This is too much. [*Exit.*

*Tal.* So cold——so dark—*(Draws breath with great difficulty.)*—Now I am well—very well.—*(Staggers, and becomes convulsed.)*

*Ruth.* A chair!

*Tal.*—*(Starts from the arms of those who support him.)*—Fire! Fire!—Oh!—*(Falls—his breast heaves high—he expires.)*

*Mrs. R.* Help! Help! [*Rushes out.*

*Lew.* God of Heaven!—*(Kneels and takes his hand.)*

*Ruth.*—*(With uplifted hands, and voice choaked with tears.)*—Oh conscience, conscience!

*Ell.*—*(Casts a look of agony towards* Tal.)—All ——We shall meet again.—*(The curtain falls.)*

THE END.

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